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No. 33

Senate

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JON KYL, a Senator from the State of Arizona.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, we pause today to lift our hearts to You. You are the God of hope who fills us with joy and peace. Thank You for the privilege of serving You as we labor for country.

Today, inspire our Senators with Your presence. Renew their minds, stir their spirits, and warm their hearts. Give them wisdom so that they can alleviate the suffering of the multitudes. Open to us opportunities to touch the lives of others with the spirit of hope we find in You.

Let our lips and lives sing Your praises for the kingdom, the power, and the glory belong to You. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON KYL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JON KYL, a Senator

from the State of Arizona, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KYL thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we are returning to the consideration of the budget resolution. Last night, the two managers reached an agreement for a series of amendments that will be debated this morning. Following that debate, we will schedule votes on the amendments debated last evening, as well as the amendments that will be finished this morning. We will likely have the first vote around 1 o'clock today.

We have a joint meeting at 2 o'clock today. Senators will gather in the Chamber and depart at approximately 1:40 to hear the address by the President of Liberia. We would like to dispose of two votes prior to that joint meeting so I ask all Senators vote quickly on the first vote so we have time to do that second vote prior to our departure.

When we return from that joint meeting, at approximately 3 o'clock today, we will start a series of rollcall votes to dispose of the remaining amendments from the list agreed to. We continue to work toward an agreement for consideration of the debt limit extension. We may turn to that bill later today as well.

I will say again that we have a lot to do. We have the budget resolution and the debt limit extension, both of which we need to complete this week. We will stay as late as necessary today, tomorrow,

Thursday night, Friday to complete these two issues. I encourage Senators to show as much restraint as possible to allow us to finish at the earliest possible time.

I am happy to yield to the Senator from Alaska.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

HONORING MAGGIE INOUE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, words cannot express the sadness that my wife, Catherine and I felt when we learned Maggie Inouye had passed away.

Maggie was truly DAN's partner in life. Their courtship and marriage was a love story for the ages.

As so many of us did during World War II, DAN put his education on hold to serve his country. When he met Maggie, DAN was finishing his undergraduate degree at the University of Hawaii. He knew instantly he wanted to marry her. On their second date, they were engaged.

From that point on, Maggie was a constant source of support and friendship for DAN. She had a gift for teaching and a way with words. Maggie worked as a university speech instructor while DAN was finishing college. Many have praised DAN's speeches on the Senate floor, but few know Maggie had a hand in our good friend's eloquence. As Frank Fasi, the former mayor of Honolulu, once said, "If anyone was responsible, she was responsible for [DAN's] wonderful oratory."

When DAN decided to go into politics, Maggie supported him, listened to him, and campaigned for him.

When DAN was elected to the House of Representatives in 1959, Maggie came to Washington with him to help serve the people of Hawaii. It could not have been easy to leave her family and friends in Hawaii behind, but Maggie was a devoted wife—and in her own, quiet way, a devoted public servant.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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In his autobiography, DAN tells the story of the day he was elected to the Senate. It was Election Day in 1962, and DAN and Maggie had gone to the polls. As they walked toward the voting booth DAN asked Maggie, "How do you think you'll like being a Senator's lady?"

Maggie looked at DAN and said, "Being DAN INOUE's lady is what's important. The rest is just extra."

That story really tells you who Maggie Inouye was. She was an elegant woman. Her love for DAN was absolute, and she was completely devoted to him.

Maggie lived her life with great dignity, grace, and optimism. It was these qualities that drew DAN to her 58 years ago. Even illness could not dampen her spirit.

Catherine and I extend our deepest sympathies to DAN, their son Kenny and his wife Jessica, and Maggie's five sisters. Maggie will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

As everyone can tell, I too have a mentor in my wife Catherine. Dr. Lindsey Hayes helped me prepare these remarks.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Alaska, I ask the calling of the quorum be rescinded.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of Senate Concurrent Resolution 83, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 83) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

Pending:

Specter amendment No. 3048, to increase the advance appropriations allowance in order to fund health, education and training, and low-income programs.

Stabenow amendment No. 3056, to provide \$5 billion for our emergency responders so that they can field effective and reliable interoperable communications equipment to respond to natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and the public safety needs of America's communities, and fully offset this by closing tax loopholes and collecting more from the tax gap.

Menendez amendment No. 3054, to provide an additional \$965 million to make our ports

more secure by increasing port security grants, increasing inspections, improving existing programs, and increasing research and development, and to fully offset this additional funding by closing tax loopholes.

McConnell amendment No. 3061, to provide funding for maritime security, including the Container Security Initiative, improved data for targeted cargo searches, and full background checks and security threat assessments of personnel at our nation's seaports.

Byrd amendment No. 3062, to provide \$184 million over five years for the Mine Safety and Health Administration to hire additional mine safety inspectors, paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes.

Chambliss (for Dayton) amendment No. 3018, to restore funding for the Byrne/JAG grant program to the FY 2003 level of \$900 million, offset with an across the board cut to administrative expenses, travel and consulting services.

Murray amendment No. 3063, to restore funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program to the fiscal 2004 level by closing tax loopholes previously slated for elimination in Senate-passed legislation.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3068

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I thought the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, Senator GREGG, might give us a little bit more texture about the order of the day, but I think the majority leader pointed out what the schedule is going to be. The first amendment, as I understand that is to be laid down, is an amendment which I now ask unanimous consent to call up.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arizona [Mr. KYL], for himself and Mr. CORNYN, proposes amendment numbered 3068.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To designate \$2 billion in immigration- and homeland security-related funding for interior enforcement purposes, including, but not limited to: federal detention bed spaces and personnel; implementation of an expanded and user-friendly Electronic Employment Verification System; and, additional worksite enforcement personnel, including additional immigration enforcement agents, forensics auditors, fraud agents, intelligence research assistants, employer outreach assistants, and others)

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent Senator CORNYN be added as an original cosponsor of this amendment.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KYL. By way of brief explanation, this amendment adds, with an offset from the function 920, a total of

\$2 billion to the fiscal year 2007 budget for the purpose of additional immigration and Homeland Security resources. The actual tally of costs that we are probably going to have to bear exceeds this amount. But in effect, this will be a downpayment toward the necessary work to be done in beginning to prepare for a temporary worker program, a worker eligibility or verification program and other elements of a comprehensive immigration reform that would be necessary to fit together once the Senate acts and the House acts on such a system.

In addition, funding that could be included within this \$2 billion is the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program, or SCAAP funding, which the budget currently does not fund but which historically has been funded at up to about \$600 million. Last year, it was a little more than a third that much. Clearly, Congress needs to act to reinstate the funding for the SCAAP program. This amendment can accommodate that funding as well.

Let me list the primary elements of this particular amendment that funds programs necessary to begin the development of the worker verification program in connection with comprehensive immigration reform.

One thing we need to do is to implement an electronic employment verification system and clean up the Social Security database and reissue a secure Social Security card and number to workers in the United States as the primary method of verifying worker eligibility. That is going to require not only work to clean up the database itself but a broadening of the current basic pilot program which is the only program currently in existence that can electronically verify employment. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated it will take about \$450 million to erect the system and, in effect, to make the basic pilot program through the Department of Homeland Security mandatory, rather than discretionary, over a period of 5 years, about \$90 million each year.

The Social Security Administration has estimated costs with regard to creating a system to produce a secure Social Security card and distribute that. Those costs vary widely in terms of the estimates. One estimate that could be made, based upon information that has been provided, would provide a cost of about \$1.14 billion a year to actually get this entire system up and running. That cost, or part of that for 1 year could be included within the \$2 billion that is specified in this amendment.

Second, we are going to need worksite enforcement personnel. One of the areas that has been neglected in the current enforcement regime is the following up or auditing of employers who, in many cases, are employing illegal immigrants. The Bureau of Immigration Enforcement, responsible for enforcing immigration laws at the worksite, has requested 200 full-time employees, about a \$23 million expense

in 2005. In 2006, an additional \$18 million above the 2005 level, and the 2007 budget requests \$47.1 million for work-site enforcement to add 206 agents and support staff for this effort.

However, there are clearly a lot more requirements to be met. Some 24 million business entities file income tax returns and the number that can be checked is far less than that.

So it is clear we need additional administrative personnel so the auditing can be done and we can lay the basis for a workable worksite verification and enforcement program. Any immigration bill that passes the Congress this year will fail unless the requisite number of worksite enforcement personnel is actually funded this year.

Let me just restate that. Whatever we do this year, we are going to have to begin the process of adding the personnel, so that once we act, we can begin to enforce whatever it is we pass. If we wait until after the President signs a bill into law to do this, then there will be at least a year delay as we ramp up the personnel and necessary other systems to implement the law. So we need to begin this process now.

There is a potential to fund additional Border Patrol agents that would be authorized under the program. There is, importantly, an estimate to increase the amount of detention space that we are going to need that could be funded from this.

The 2007 budget for the Department of Homeland Security requests over \$400 million to add about 6,700 additional detention beds, rather than the 8,000 beds currently authorized each year, which would bring the total to 27,500. Clearly, at least 10,000 additional beds over the next 5 years are going to be needed.

Let me explain the primary reason for this. The illegal immigrants who are apprehended here, who come from countries other than Mexico, cannot easily be returned to their home countries in every case. In fact, in most cases, there is quite a delay. In fact, in some cases, the countries will not even take them back. Clearly, either those people have to be detained until they can be removed to their home country or they are released into our society.

The current policy has been one of "catch and release," which means hundreds of thousands of people who come from countries other than Mexico—many of them from countries of special interest; in other words, countries from which terrorists have come—are simply melding into our society, never reporting for removal. It is an unacceptable situation, everybody recognizes.

In order to have the space to detain them until they can be removed to their home country, we need to appropriate additional money. This provides the authorization for that additional detention space.

Finally, Mr. President, I mentioned the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. The estimated cost to reimburse the States—about 30 cents on the

dollar—is \$700 million this year. This funding provided for in this amendment would enable us to provide that funding to the States and to the local governments, which have had to carry the burden of housing these illegal immigrant criminals, people who have been convicted in State courts of crimes, and then the States have had to pay the expense of their incarceration. The Federal Government has in the past deemed there is at least some responsibility to help bear these costs. I think this amendment can go a long way toward meeting this responsibility.

This additional \$2 billion in no way covers all of the expenses that would need to be covered. But in addition to that which is already provided for in the budget—I have to take one second to compliment the chairman of the Budget Committee and the ranking member for their hard work to gain additional resources in the budget for a variety of programs to deal with comprehensive immigration reform. Their additions this year are historic and welcome and needed. What this funding does is to complement that in some additional areas they have not covered so we can get a start on comprehensive immigration reform and not be lagging behind 2 or 3 years simply because we did not anticipate the kind of expenses that would be needed to make such a program work.

So I compliment the members of the Budget Committee for their hard work. I think this amendment should be accepted as an additional complement to what they did.

Mr. President, I yield the floor at this time and hope to hear from my cosponsor, Senator CORNYN from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I congratulate the Senator from Arizona for his tremendous leadership in this area. I wish to detail some of that leadership and some of the work he has done. I have been proud to work with him.

I think what the amendment really helps to do is to serve as a wake-up call, a wake-up call to the Senate, a wake-up call to the Federal Government, and really a message that is being delivered day in and day out by people in my State and people all across America, who say they are sick and tired of the Federal Government not living up to its responsibilities when it comes to securing our international borders.

We all know in minute detail how porous our borders are, and we know that in the past the American people have been asked to accept solutions—like amnesty in 1986—on the condition that the Federal Government would provide a means whereby employers could determine the eligibility of prospective employees to work legally in the United States. But while the American people were given an amnesty program,

legalizing roughly 3 million individuals, the Federal Government did not provide the means for employers to determine whether that prospective employee could legally work in the United States.

The Senator from Arizona mentioned the basic pilot program which was supposed to be the means to that end, but it was a purely voluntary program, and thus employers were left with a conundrum. They needed the workforce, but they did not necessarily have access to a means to determine the legal status of prospective employees. So what they relied upon were oftentimes what turned out to be fake identification, whether driver's licenses, Social Security cards, passports, or the like. We do not expect the employers in this country to try to be FBI agents or to conduct an independent investigation as to the legal status of prospective employees.

What this amendment will do is two important things. No. 1, it will begin to cause the Federal Government to step up to finally begin to provide the resources necessary to have a bona fide electronic verification system. But perhaps more importantly, it will demonstrate the seriousness of the Federal Government to finally live up to its responsibilities.

The people across America, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—we are hearing a lot from sectors of the employment community saying they need a temporary worker program, a guest worker program. I think we all acknowledge it is important for us to determine who the 10 or 11 million people are who are currently in the country who have come here, perhaps legally in the first instance, but at least 40 percent of them have overstayed their visas and are currently out of status or people who have literally walked across or swam across the Rio Grande River to come here.

But in a post-9/11 world, there can be no doubt we must know who is in our country and what their reasons are for being here, so we can cull out the criminals, the people who come here to do us harm, and including the potential prospects of terrorists exploiting these known vulnerabilities in our way too porous border. So we need a national strategy to deal with that.

As the current occupant of the chair knows and the Senator from Arizona knows, as members of the Judiciary Committee, we are working hard to try to come up with a solution to this extraordinarily complex problem. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that, here again, we are playing catch-up.

But the purpose ultimately served by this amendment as well as the budget resolution that is pending on the floor—and the Senator from Arizona rightly praised the chairman of the Budget Committee for moving funds into building infrastructure along our border—the American people need to know we are making a firm and solid

commitment to do whatever it takes to make this system work and to finally bring it under control. Because people are not going to accept the bait and switch that essentially was foisted upon them in 1986, when they said take an amnesty, and then, on the condition we will have an employer verification system, we will actually sanction people for hiring people who cannot legally work in the United States, I do not think people will be fooled again. I certainly do not plan to be part of that.

I know there are many in Congress and in the Senate who are absolutely committed to coming up with a solution to this problem. It is not easy. But again, I do not believe the American people or our constituents sent us here necessarily to do just easy things. They expect us to come here and do more than go to receptions or meetings at the White House. They actually expect us to do some real work. But it is going to take some real work, and it is going to take some real money to finally make the investment the Federal Government has to make in order to bring this broken system under control.

So I gladly join as a cosponsor of this amendment and ask for the support of all of our colleagues for this very important step forward.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, let me say on this side we agree entirely with the need to put more resources into enforcing the border. And that part of the Senator's amendment on our side we strongly support.

Let me just register, as I have registered on previous amendments, that the problem I see with this amendment is how it is paid for. It is paid for out of section 920. But there is no money in section 920. We keep passing amendments that are theoretically funded by that source. But before we started voting for additional amendments taking money out of 920, 920 was already \$500 million underwater.

So what happens? What is the practical effect? The practical effect is that there will be an across-the-board cut on all discretionary accounts. We have now passed \$10 billion in amendments that will be funded by across-the-board cuts in discretionary accounts. That means we will reduce homeland security, we will reduce law enforcement, we will reduce national defense in order to pay for these amendments which are theoretically funded out of 920 because there is no money in 920.

So what we are left with is, at the end of the day, the appropriators had \$873 billion before this amendment, and after this amendment they will have the same amount of money—\$873 billion. If they are to use more money within that allocation for this purpose, they will simply have to reduce the other discretionary accounts. Of course, the biggest one is defense. They will have to reduce homeland security.

They will have to reduce law enforcement. They will have to reduce the others. That is the practical effect.

I know there are a whole series of other amendments that use 920 as a funding source, when there just is no money in 920. So at the end of the day, what is going to happen is there will be an across-the-board cut in all domestic accounts, and that will include defense, that will include homeland security, that will include law enforcement. So that is the practical effect.

The hard reality is, we had \$873 billion for the appropriators before this amendment. After this amendment, we will have that same amount of money for the appropriators. They will ultimately have to decide how it is funded.

With that, I want to indicate we would be willing to take this amendment on a voice vote, if the Senator from Arizona would be willing to so do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I certainly am.

Let me, first of all, say I think the comments of the ranking member of the Budget Committee are entirely appropriate, and they are absolutely accurate. It is a matter of setting priorities.

And to the point that we are requiring the appropriators to engage in a very difficult job of setting those priorities and having to choose between different programs, I certainly take his point. He is 100 percent right. It is our view that, of course, among the highest of priorities is national defense, homeland security, and this is part of that.

We hope to work with him and with the members of the Appropriations Committee to try to make sure the priorities are established in the appropriate way. I do appreciate his cooperation here, and we are ready to take the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 3068) was agreed to.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. CONRAD. The regular order is now to go to Senator NELSON, is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The regular order is the amendment by the Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Will the Senator from North Dakota yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I would proffer a unanimous consent request that since the Senator from Iowa is not able to be here right now—it is my understanding he is delayed in traffic—I be able to proceed by offering my amendment.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, Senator GREGG and I have an agreement that neither one of us do unanimous consent

requests without the other informed or on the floor. I have been told by his staff that it is OK with Senator GREGG. With that assurance, I have no objection. I thank Senator NELSON very much for being here to expedite the business of the Senate. It is gracious of him to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent that the next amendment be my amendment instead of the regular order of the Grassley amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3009

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I call up amendment 3009.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. NELSON] proposes an amendment numbered 3009.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect medicare beneficiaries who enroll in the prescription drug benefit during 2006)

At the end of title III, add the following:

SEC. ____ DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROTECT MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES WHO ENROLL IN THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT DURING 2006.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would—

(1) extend the annual open enrollment period under the Medicare prescription drug program under part D of title XVIII through all of 2006 without imposing a late enrollment penalty for months during such period; and

(2) allow a one-time change of plan enrollment under such program at any time during 2006;

by the amount provided in such measure for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2006 through 2011.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, this is the deadline amendment on the Medicare prescription drug, Medicare Part D, that the Senate has heard about now over the course of the last 6 months. Each time we have been in a parliamentary procedure where we have been able to receive a majority of votes, in excess of 51 votes, but because of the parliamentary procedure we have found ourselves in, a 60-vote majority was required. Not so today. This amendment can pass with a simple majority vote, according to how many Senators are here, whatever is the simple majority.

It is an amendment all of our Senators have been hearing a lot about. As we have gone home to our States,

clearly every Senator has received an earful from senior citizens of their States in which the seniors have not only implored but in some cases begged for an extension of the May 15 deadline for signing up for the Medicare prescription drug benefit.

Why? Why are senior citizens confused and bewildered and, in some cases, frightened? They are confused because they are facing a multiplicity of plans. For example, in my State of Florida, 18 companies are offering 43 stand-alone plans, 43 prescription drug plans that a senior citizen is to try to make a determination about which is the best for them according to the prescription drugs they need. They are confused and bewildered and, in some cases, frightened. Why are they frightened? Because they know if by the deadline they don't make a choice, they are going to be penalized 1 percent of the overall drug premium prices per month or 12 percent a year.

Indeed, the Congressional Budget Office, in determining what is the cost of this amendment over 5 years, has taken that into account and has said it is going to be an additional cost on average to a senior citizen of 6 to 7 percent. Our senior citizens cannot afford that. So they are frightened.

They are also frightened in knowing if by the deadline they are confused and they pick a plan hastily in order to satisfy the deadline, they know if they happen to choose the wrong plan, they are stuck for a year. That causes considerable consternation and fright, because the medicines they take often are life giving. And thank the good Lord, we have progressed to the point that now the miracles of modern medicine through prescriptions have become an opportunity for us to have a much higher quality of life. A lot of the ailments that afflicted us 20, 30, and 40 years ago that had to be dealt with in a hospital by surgery and hospital procedures today can be taken care of, in large part, by prescription drugs. Naturally, senior citizens are confused. They are bewildered and, in some cases, they are frightened.

Every one of the Senators here has been hearing from their folks back home who are saying: Help us. Yet this body has taken a position. We are looking out for Medicare instead of looking out for the people Medicare serves. It is the beneficiaries of Medicare, the senior citizens of this country, we ought to be looking out for. So we have had this issue twice in front of us with a majority vote. We are going to have another opportunity today.

The stakes are high because simply we need to provide our seniors with the time and the resources they need to make an informed decision. In some cases, this is a matter of life or death, especially for those who are frail. How do we expect an artificial deadline to be handled with someone who has the onset of dementia?

Further complicating matters, the Medicare prescription drug benefit has

been marred by implementation problems. These appear to be widespread, and they are clearly adversely affecting vulnerable beneficiaries. How many news stories have all of us read that talk about the senior citizen who is distraught because they go to the pharmacy and the pharmacy says: Your particular prescription is not on the formulary of the new plan. We saw that in what is called dual eligibles, in the shifting of Medicaid recipients over to Medicare. Hopefully that is going to be worked out, but it is all a part of this implementation of a new program that is having difficulty. Hopefully we will get it right, but we need to give senior citizens a break and not hold them with the guillotine over their head with an artificial deadline of May 15.

If we pass this amendment by delaying the late enrollment penalties and giving every beneficiary a chance to change plans once during the first year of the prescription drug benefit, then we can make sure our citizens are not going to have to make hasty decisions.

This amendment that I offer on behalf of a bipartisan group of Senators, including Senator SNOWE of Maine, instructs the Senate Finance Committee to extend the annual open enrollment period under the Medicare prescription drug program through all of 2006 without imposing a late enrollment penalty and to allow a one-time change in the plans at any point in 2006.

We are going to hear some Members oppose this amendment by saying that the Congressional Budget Office recently rescored the cost of extending the deadline. When the amendment was here before us a month or so ago, CBO had scored it at about a \$300 million cost over 5 years. CBO now says it is going to cost \$2 billion over 5 years. It is important to note that the new score by CBO is mainly due to the fact that the enrollment program has gone so poorly. The new cost reflects the fact that 10 million fewer people will be signing up for the drug benefit than previously estimated. That is not the senior citizens' fault. Why should they be penalized by saying this is going to cost more when, in fact, it has had such a problem in its implementation and it is not quite as attractive to seniors as the administration had once thought?

According to CBO's new estimates, if we extend the deadline for signing up through all of 2006, 1.1 million more beneficiaries will sign up before the end of the year. In addition, 10 million beneficiaries will pay lower premiums because they will have fewer penalties. So on the one hand, CBO is saying it is going to cost more because the enrollment program has gone so poorly, but on the other hand, the Congressional Budget Office is saying, indeed, if we extend it, we are going to have more beneficiaries sign up, over a million more, they are saying, will sign up if we extend the deadline. And they are saying the beneficiaries who sign up—they are estimating 10 million—will pay lower premiums because they will

have fewer penalties. What Senator would want to vote against this amendment and, therefore, increase the cost to the senior citizens?

By opposing this amendment, if, indeed, the chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, is going to oppose it, it would seem that those who would oppose would suggest that you don't want to allow an additional million beneficiaries to enroll in the program. I would think we would want to enroll everybody as much as possible. And why would we want to punish 10 million beneficiaries with higher premiums through penalties?

It is kind of arcane language but also, according to the Congressional Budget Office, they have reevaluated the cost of the Medicare prescription drug benefit, and it is now projected over the next 5 years, the overall program, to cost \$5 billion less than originally estimated by CBO. They also say by extending the deadline, it is going to cost another \$2 billion over 5 years. That means that net, it is going to be costing \$3 billion less than originally anticipated. So in every way we look at it, it is a win-win.

It is a win for the seniors. It is certainly a win for the seniors in taking them out of the confusion and bewilderment. It is a win for the seniors in them not paying more on their premiums with the penalties that the CBO estimates. And it is also a win in that the overall cost of the program would be net less than what it was originally expected to cost.

This is a time-limited, very important step which would help ease the pressure of the first year of this new drug program. So I think it is time that we now go on the record with a majority vote and pass the extension for the relief of our senior citizens.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have some points I would like to make. Before I do that, I will respond to a couple of points that the Senator from Florida made. One was his speaking about the bewilderment among seniors about the program. I would say that a great deal of the bewilderment comes from the confusion that people have because of the rhetoric of people who don't like this plan and have tried to kill it with rhetoric because they didn't have the votes on the floor of the Senate. That has not created a very good environment.

On the other hand, I can say that at my town meetings—I held 16, Monday through Thursday, during our last break—people who came expressed some wonderment about exactly what program to get into. But people who also had already selected a program gave very positive comments about the benefit of the program to them.

The other point I would like to make, Mr. President, is the point that was made that maybe the cost is coming in

less than what was anticipated because not enough seniors are coming in. I think it is very clear that the reason this is costing \$8 billion less than what 3 years ago CBO estimated it would be for this year is because of the competition. As a conferee, as I was going through ironing out the differences between the House and Senate on this bill, we were very nervous that our anticipation of the premium being \$37 a month, on average, might end up being much higher. And we, as writers of this legislation, would be embarrassed about that.

Competition has brought that premium down to \$25. Instead of \$37, the average premium is \$25. We were estimating that there would be all sorts of savings from competition because we were patterning this program after what the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan had been for 4 years. It worked so well for Federal employees, we felt it would work very well for seniors, and it is working very well in this respect for seniors. But we estimated there would be certain savings.

Quite frankly, we were nervous about whether these savings would materialize. But they did materialize—to the point of adding up to that \$8 billion that I have referred to. But with specific drugs—we have drugs and pharmacists coming in under these plans—brand-name drugs are coming in on an average of 18 percent less than otherwise in a pharmacy. If it is mail order, it is about 26 percent less. In the case of generics bought at a pharmacy, it is 55 percent less, and for mail order it is 66 percent less.

So I suggest to the Senator from Florida that enrollment has nothing to do with it. The savings are coming because competition is working.

Now, another confession we have to make is that as we were writing this bill, we wondered whether we would have enough plans sign up so we would have this competition that works so well in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan—even to the point where we decided we needed a backup plan. Just in case only one plan signed up, we would make sure the Government set up a competitive plan so that there would be some choice for our seniors. We ended up with lots of plans, and we hear from the other side there are too many plans. Well, the marketplace brought plans in and drove down the price. Some of these plans are going to get out because the marketplace is going to drive them out. Hopefully, we still have plenty of choice when this all happens. But competition is working.

Now, also, I hear the rhetoric about too many plans being confusing. I just read in the newspaper in a whole other area, but to throw it out for comparison, I heard that in regard to people signing up for health savings accounts—HSAs—you have to have a catastrophic insurance policy go with it. There are 96 companies selling catastrophic policies. Yet we have had 3 million Americans sign up in less than

a year for catastrophic policies. I don't know whether it is confusing to them or not, but they are joining. That is twice as many plans that are available. We don't hear people complaining about too many plans out there for health savings accounts.

So I don't know why—except for rhetoric to gain political advantage—we talk about too many plans out there for seniors. The more plans, the more choice.

Do you think Congress has the ability to write one plan that is going to fit the needs of 44 million seniors and disabled people? First of all, if you did that, it would have to be mandatory. If you make it mandatory, it would be evidence that you never learned a lesson from the last time we tried to extend Medicare and make it mandatory when we put a catastrophic program in in 1988 or 1989, which passed this body—I don't know—it was a closer vote than it was repealed.

But when you go home to the grassroots of Iowa, and every other State in the Nation, there is an uproar because it was mandatory and people had to pay for something they didn't want to use. And in a year or two it was almost unanimously repealed by this body. So we believed it ought to be voluntary, and it is voluntary. So if you don't want to join, you don't have to join.

But if you want to join, everybody has different needs and desires and you ought to have some choice, just like Federal employees have. If it has worked 40 years for Federal employees, it seems to me that it is a pattern that we ought to have enough respect for the seniors of America to give to them.

Mr. President, I would like to go to the issue before us, an issue that we have discussed before, not an issue that I entirely disagree with the Senator from Florida on because I don't know what the situation is going to be by May 15. But I know if you had an amendment up to extend the deadline for filing income tax on April 15 and you moved it to May 15, everybody would be going to the post office on May 15 to drop in their income tax forms, and I would be one of them. Americans procrastinate until the last minute. Some are going to procrastinate until the last minute on joining one of these plans.

The extent to which people benefit from this plan, particularly lower income people, because it is highly subsidized—up to 98 percent—it seems to me the extent to which you want to give them more leeway, you are not being very humane to them if they can benefit from the program today instead of tomorrow.

So you may be right, but today you are not right. You may be right on May 1. Maybe your timing is off. Maybe I am conceding too much. My staff will probably tell me when I am done I was too good to you, that you are too right. But there are other ways of doing what you want to do, and I am going to suggest a way. You are probably going to disagree with it.

Before I get to that point, I want to give some background. The amendment by Senator NELSON is going to extend the open enrollment period. Information on the Medicare prescription drug benefits first became available last October, and then the open enrollment period began November 15. So today the open enrollment period has been going on for 4 months, and there are still 2 months left before open enrollment ends on May 15.

I personally think that enrollment is going well. About a quarter million people—250,000 beneficiaries, in other words—enroll each week. Enrollment in stand-alone plans in my State of Iowa increased by 71 percent between January and February. At this rate, Medicare is on a track to reach the goal of 28 million to 30 million beneficiaries with coverage by May 15.

I think making decisions about one's health care can, in fact, be difficult. That is why information about the available plans went out way back in October. That is why beneficiaries have 6 months to make a decision. That is why there are many resources to help beneficiaries learn about their options and make their decisions. That is why beneficiaries can change their plan choice once before May 15. But that said, I know there is concern that beneficiaries may need more time. So the amendment I am offering would grant the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to extend the enrollment period. We are just 2½ months into this new benefit—the first expansion of Medicare in 40 years.

Personally, I think it is premature to change this date. So I offer this amendment as a compromise. The amendment would grant the Secretary definitive authority to extend the enrollment period. It would waive the application of the late enrollment penalty, and it would extend beneficiaries' rights to change their plan, and to change it once. Despite the rhetoric that we constantly hear around here, I hope everyone wants this benefit to be successful.

I know there have been some disappointing startup problems, especially for some of our Nation's most frail and vulnerable beneficiaries. But what would you expect when, on January 1, you have 44 million people rushing into a brand new Government program? There are obviously going to be some roadblocks, when people sign up on December 31 and go to the drugstore on January 2 to get drugs under a plan that you are trying to squeeze 44 million Americans into. It is quite obvious that there would be some problems.

I think the administration has made great progress in getting these problems solved. The Secretary of HHS has sat down with our committee on three occasions to hear both Republicans and Democrats, to listen to what the problems are.

I think it is mutually agreed that there were about seven areas where there were problems. The question I

asked three times was: Is there any change in law that is necessary for the Secretary of HHS in order to grapple with these problems? And the Secretary said, no, he had ample authority to do that. He pointed out to us the seven problems. He pointed out to us how he was going to solve those problems. Between meetings, he gave us updates on progress being made toward solving those problems.

So I think we have a Secretary of Health and Human Services and we have a director of CMS who are working more than full time, and a lot of these problems, quite frankly, are simply the technicians it takes to make sure the computer software is working right.

What is the problem?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). The Senator will note that the time on this amendment has expired, although the amendment of the Senator from Iowa is next in line and it would be appropriate to proceed to that amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I think we have a Secretary who is working hard on it. There are problems, but at the same time, we are writing a million prescriptions a day without incident. Beneficiaries are saving a lot of money.

I spoke with the Senator from Florida about how the average premium is now \$25 a month, 20 percent lower than we first projected. I spoke with the Senator from Florida about the lower drug costs, saving the taxpayers dollars as well. Just this year, the benefit, as I said, will cost \$8 billion less than originally thought. The 10-year cost has dropped by \$180 billion.

I heard from a couple in Iowa who are saving nearly \$2,800 a year. Another Iowan is saving \$1,750 a year. And here is another one. A person from Massachusetts is saving \$17,000—\$17,000—a year on medicine because they are participating in this program.

Getting this level of savings depends on strong competition among the plans, and we have that. Many people will remember the skepticism on whether many plans would participate at all. Some would say that we have too many choices and that is why beneficiaries need more time. Those choices, in fact—let me put it this way: It is not just choices, but because of choice, we have competition keeping premiums low, and they are letting people pick the plan that best suits their medical needs.

My amendment strikes an effective compromise, I believe, to Senator NELSON's amendment, which is before us. Senator NELSON's amendment calls for a unilateral extension of the enrollment deadline right now, and it would extend it until the end of the year and into the enrollment period of next year.

As I said, I think it is premature to make that decision now. Some people think 6 months is not enough time to make a decision on a plan. Yet millions are enrolling even now.

Many people are also concerned about the late enrollment penalty. This penalty is modeled after the way Medicare Part B has worked since its origination in 1966. There is a late enrollment penalty in Part B that anybody who doesn't sign up for it when they get to be 65 will pay, and that is there to encourage people to enroll early and to think of Part B as not some Government program, just a Government program, but to see all of this—whether it is Part B or it is Part D, as in drugs—as an insurance policy.

People who are 65 today thinking about signing up for the Part D drug program under Medicare may be very healthy and may think they have never taken a pill in their life and that they will never take a pill, but that is today when they are 65. They are not going to know what their health needs are when they are 70 and maybe get sick and have to take a lot of medication.

It is a little bit as if you were never going to have a car accident, you would never buy car insurance. If you were never going to have a fire in your house, you would never buy fire insurance. But Americans see insurance as a very useful tool, a necessary tool to manage their risks, and our seniors and disabled people ought to see this as an insurance policy, maybe not needed today, but that will be needed some day, and they ought to be enrolled.

Obviously, if you didn't have that penalty in Part B and now in Part D, the drug part, then who would ever sign up until the day before they have to buy their first pill, just as you would not buy your car insurance policy until the day before you were going to have a car accident.

So I hope people see it as a good investment, as an insurance policy, as it has been for Federal employees for the last 40 years.

The late enrollment penalty is designed to encourage enrollment, and as with other coverage of insurance, it spreads these costs across many enrollees. The more people enroll, the lower the costs are for everyone.

So if the Senator from Florida wants to keep these costs continually low, get more people under the umbrella, sell an insurance policy, as he has been so successful selling people on the importance of keeping Senator NELSON in the Senate.

The open enrollment creates an enrollment deadline. The deadline that is involved in the open enrollment period encourages people to act, to get the protection against unexpected drug costs. We all know that people sometimes wait until they need coverage to get it. It would be the same as if only people with a burning house get fire insurance. If you waited until the day before your house was going to burn down to buy fire insurance, fire insurance would be awfully expensive. That leads to higher costs for everyone.

For the same reasons then, there is an enrollment period and a late enrollment penalty under Medicare Part B,

not at all a new idea. The premise of the Nelson amendment is that Congress needs to override that 6-month open enrollment period and make it even longer. The Nelson amendment would do that today even though enrollment is on track. It would extend the open enrollment period now even though we don't know whether it will be necessary 2 months from now. It presupposes a bad outcome to the enrollment of Part D of Medicare. It plans for failure, and I think this plan, particularly with how successful the competition is, for failure is wrong.

Frankly, I think Senator NELSON's amendment has the potential to do more harm than good, regardless of his good intentions. Without the pressure of that May 15 deadline, many beneficiaries may forgo savings by putting off their decision.

Now, it may turn out that the enrollment period needs to be extended, as I said in my first remark to my colleague from Florida. And if that is the case, then my amendment would give the Secretary the authority to do that right away. No further congressional action would be needed.

Under my amendment, if in 2 months the Secretary determines the enrollment period should be extended, if enrollment is lagging, for example, then he has clear authority to do that.

My amendment would also automatically delay the late enrollment penalty if the enrollment period is extended by the Secretary of HHS.

My amendment would provide the funding needed to continue the open enrollment period. This funding is needed to continue the round-the-clock operations of the 1-800 Medicare number, and the expanded operations for that open enrollment period.

I close this debate by reading an editorial from the New York Times in 1966. This was an editorial about the implementation of the original Medicare Program we have had on the books since 1966. A quote from the New York Times:

But as Medicare gets underway, the danger is that the strains on it will generate pressures for unsound change. They will come from those who will be disappointed because they have been led to expect too much as well as from those who see failure in every shortcoming. Changes will come in time, but they should be made on the basis of Medicare's own experience. This great new experiment must be given ample time to get over its growing pains.

Those growing pains for Part D Medicare are now just 2½ months old. So I go back to the first sentence, for the consideration of my friend from Florida, "that the strains on the system will generate pressures for unsound change." I think his is an unsound change. This quote speaks volumes about our current situation with Part D Medicare.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and to oppose the Nelson amendment.

Mr. President, do I have to ask to have a previous amendment set aside

in order to send my amendment to the desk?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No, but the Senator should seek consent that the time already used be charged against this new amendment.

Mr. GRASSLEY. You mean the time I used off the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Correct.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that time be charged to my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3073

Mr. GRASSLEY. I send my amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRASSLEY] proposes an amendment numbered 3073.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a reserve fund to allow for deficit-neutral legislation that would provide for an extension of the Medicare part D enrollment period)

At the end of title III, insert the following:
SEC. ____ . RESERVE FUND FOR EXTENSION OF THE MEDICARE PART D ENROLLMENT PERIOD.

If the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that—

(1) authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to extend the initial open enrollment period under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act beyond May 15, 2006;

(2) provides funding to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Social Security Administration for the purpose of conducting enrollment activities for the period of any extension of the initial open enrollment period;

(3) waives the application of the late enrollment penalty for the period of any extension of the initial open enrollment period; and

(4) permits beneficiaries to change their enrollment election in such part D once during the initial open enrollment period, including throughout any extension of the initial open enrollment period;

the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question about this amendment?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Let me get a copy of my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa has control of the time.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I will yield to whatever the Senator wants me to listen to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to ask the distinguished

Senator from Iowa, does his amendment waive the penalties to senior citizens or does it give the Secretary of HHS discretion to waive the penalties?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, to the Senator from Florida, Mr. NELSON, if the Secretary extends the period, it automatically then waives the penalty for that period of time.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask the distinguished Senator, if the Secretary waives the requirement—so the Senator's amendment gives the Secretary discretion to waive the requirements of the May 15 deadline?

Mr. GRASSLEY. The purpose of my amendment is—I think I am answering the Senator's question. Let's say May 14 comes and the Secretary decides we need more time and he makes a decision to extend that period of time. Let's say he extends it from May 15 to September 15. During the period of May 15 to September 15, there would be no penalty.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for answering the question.

I would inquire of the Chair, under the previous order, does the Senator from Florida have time to discuss the Senator's amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time in opposition is controlled by the Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, how much time do I have on this amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now a total of 13 minutes 30 seconds in opposition.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I thank the Senator. I understand the good intentions of the Senator from Iowa in what is a difficult situation for him. The Senator from Iowa has indicated he had a number of townhall meetings, of which there seemed to be complete acceptance and happiness with this prescription drug benefit. I want the Senator to know that I, too, have had innumerable townhall meetings in my State of Florida, and I get exactly the opposite result. Perhaps that is because it is a demographic fact that Florida has a higher percentage of senior citizens than most States. Perhaps it is that our senior citizens are very aware and current on events and on news. Perhaps it is also because there is a great deal of activity in our State of Florida with regard to wanting to sign up for this plan, because we have the beneficence of the fact that so many seniors around the country, including from the State of Iowa, the State of the Senator, retire and move to the State of Florida. So there is great consternation, I want the Senator to understand, among seniors in our State.

The Senator mentioned earlier in his comments—and I don't take the comments personally—he said there was a

politicizing of this particular issue. This Senator from Florida has an obligation to stand up and fight for his people. I can tell you that the senior citizens of my State are concerned and they are confused and they are bewildered and, in some cases, they are frightened because of this. I will concede to the Senator from Iowa that what he said is true, that normal human behavior is when we have a deadline, we wait until it is close to that deadline to sign up. However, I would suggest to the Senator in his consideration of this issue, and to the Senate as they decide between the amendment of the Senator from Iowa or this Senator's amendment, we should be looking at what is not best for the Medicare Part D benefit but what is best for the beneficiaries, the senior citizens. When the Senator from Iowa tells us in fact his amendment is going to give the discretion to the Secretary of HHS, look what the Secretary has said; he throws it right back to the Congress. He says:

If people haven't had time to enroll, that is a policy decision that Congress has to make.

He said that a month ago, the Secretary of HHS, a distinguished Secretary in the President's Cabinet.

I would suggest to the Senator if we are going to make the policy here, let's consider these people, these senior citizens who are anguished at this point.

I will simply close with this: Medicare first thought they were going to have about 35 million seniors enrolled in this program. Now they are expecting that they are going to be about 10 million short, that there is going to be only about 25 million enrolled. CBO has estimated if we extend the deadline, we are going to get at least another million enrolled this year, and over the life of the program we will get that additional 10 million. So why would we not want to go on and extend the deadline and prohibit those penalties that CBO said will average to senior citizens 5 to 7 percent? Why would we not want to go on and extend that deadline instead of leaving it to the discretion of the Secretary of HHS?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida has used the 5 minutes allotted to him.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have 35 seconds?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized for 35 seconds.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I only want to clarify two things. One, if I said there were no complaints at my town meetings about the program, there were, but I found a great deal of people who had enrolled very satisfied and also satisfied with the process.

The second thing is, it has to be a policy decision by Congress to do what I want to do, so it is still up to Congress to make this decision. I would be willing to make this decision if it was made first, but your amendment is up today. So it is still a choice we are making.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, was the Senator in the middle of his thought that he wanted to complete? Can he do that?

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Of course.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, let me yield 1 minute to the Senator from Florida, and then we are going to go to the Senator from Pennsylvania for 5 minutes, and then we are going to come back on this amendment. The Senator from Pennsylvania has another obligation, so we want to try to accommodate him on that. But I give an additional minute at this time to the Senator from Florida, and I will tell him we will have more time for him momentarily after the Senator presents his amendment.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I can sum this up in 60 seconds. The choice here is between a direction by the Congress to definitely extend the deadline, or the alternative Senator GRASSLEY is offering, which is to give the Secretary of HHS the discretion to extend the deadline.

The policy of the administration is clear. I asked Dr. McClellan, the head of CMS, his position on extending the deadline and he said:

Senator, we are not supporting that legislation at this time.

So I think it is clear, the choice is clear for the Senate between these two amendments.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, now we will go to the Senator from Pennsylvania for 5 minutes to offer his amendment, and then we will come back to this subject. So I alert the Senator from Florida, we have some time remaining.

I yield to the Senator from Pennsylvania.

AMENDMENT NO. 3050

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to call up amendment No. 3050.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. SANTORUM], for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. COLLINS and Ms. SNOWE, proposes an amendment numbered 3050.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program)

On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 6, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 10, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 14, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 18, line 15, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 1, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 4, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 7, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

On page 28, line 11, decrease the amount by \$1,300,000,000.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, this is an amendment I am offering on behalf of Senator COLEMAN as well as Senator COLLINS and Senator SNOWE on the CDBG Program. This is an amendment I worked with Senator COLEMAN on last year. He offered it last year, and I want to thank him for his cooperation in allowing me to step forward.

This is an important issue to my State. It is an important issue to most States across America. This is a program that is, I believe, one of the most effective programs we have in the Federal Government to help localities deal with housing problems, local economic development problems, and community problems we have. In Pennsylvania we get well over \$50 million a year for this program. I don't know of anything that unites Republicans and Democrats on a local level more than the CDBG Program.

The Community Development Block Grant Program, CDBG, is a program that takes money from the Federal Government and distributes it into the local communities for local priorities. There is a broad degree of discretion in this program and it allows the local communities to leverage Federal dollars to attract, in some cases, private dollars and, in some cases, other State dollars or philanthropic dollars that are used for projects that are vital to the local community.

Unfortunately, in the last few years, the President has reduced the funding allocation for this program. Last year we were able to put back some of that money into CDBG. We ended up with about \$3.7 billion for the CDBG last year. My amendment would add \$1.3 billion for this year. That level, by the way, is exactly the level that was appropriated for CDBG in the year 2004. So we are not talking about an out-

rageous increase; we are just trying to get back to historic levels of funding for this program.

Again, it is a program that is vitally important for the local community. This is offset with section 920. I have heard the Senator from North Dakota talk about there being no money in section 920, and he is absolutely right, there is no money in section 920. But what this amendment does is set priorities. It says to the appropriators that the Congress—I think this amendment will be approved overwhelmingly—that the Congress and the Senate believe this is a program that needs more robust funding. This is a program that is a priority for the Senate and for folks on both sides of the aisle.

I appreciate the opportunity to come here to speak on this very important amendment. It sends a very clear signal that this is an area we need more resources devoted to. I thank the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from New Hampshire for allowing me the opportunity to speak at this time.

AMENDMENT NO. 3073

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is now recognized to go back to the previous amendment.

Mr. CONRAD. Will the Chair inform me how much time I have on that amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 6 minutes 12 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I will not take all of that time. Let me say this: I voted for the Medicare prescription drug program. I voted for it because I think it will help a substantial number of my seniors. Also, that legislation contained provisions to make Medicare reimbursement for rural hospitals more equivalent to what urban hospitals receive. In my State, under the old law, our hospitals were receiving about one-half as much to treat the same illness as a more urban hospital. That was in part corrected in the Medicare prescription drug legislation.

Let us be frank. The handling of the Medicare prescription drug implementation has been a fiasco from beginning to end. I think every one of us has heard loudly and clearly from our States—I certainly have. I have done nine meetings in my State, including hosting Secretary Leavitt, on this question. It has been botched. The implementation of the Medicare prescription drug bill has been botched. On the day, the initial day, I have never seen such chaos. You couldn't get through on the phones. You couldn't get through on the Internet. You couldn't get accurate information. Cards weren't in people's hands. They automatically enrolled those who were eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid in plans that often didn't cover the drugs that they were on.

That is a fact. This was very badly handled by the administration, as badly handled as anything that I have seen in 20 years representing my State

in the Senate. It was an absolute fiasco. That is a fact.

The question is, What do we do to try to improve the circumstance? The Senator from Florida, who has a very large elderly population, has made one constructive suggestion. He has said let's extend the deadline.

Let me just say, in my State, 37 or 38 percent of the people who are eligible have signed up so far. We have over 100,000 people eligible and only 37,000 have signed up and about half of those were automatically enrolled. So the true signup, the voluntary signup is very low.

It is clear we need more time. One of the problems is there are so many plans that it just confuses people. There are 41 plans in North Dakota. In all of the meetings I have had, people have said to me: Senator, how can you make any sense out of this, especially since, when you go to the phone lines you can't get an answer; when you go to the computer, the Internet sites, you can't get an accurate answer? I think the Senator from Florida is responsible in saying we ought to extend the deadline.

According to the department, we now know that some 10 million people will not have signed up in time. That means they will start to have penalties imposed on them. Ten million seniors, many of them frail and elderly, will start to be penalized because they can't make sense out of this profusion of plans and this confusion.

Senator NELSON has a very straightforward approach. He extends the deadline. The Senator from Iowa has an alternative. His approach is to give the department that has botched this signup the decision about whether the deadline is extended. That is a very clear choice. Do we really want the decision whether the deadline is extended to be made by the people who made a hash of this program's implementation? Or are we going to take responsibility and extend the deadline so 10 million people aren't penalized through no fault of their own. I think that choice is very clear.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, as I have been traveling across the State of New Jersey on a listening tour, I have heard from countless seniors and their loved ones that the new prescription drug plan has brought much confusion, concern, and difficulty.

In townhall meetings and in senior homes, these sentiments of puzzlement are echoed over and over again.

Knowing the challenges seniors are facing, I am committed to doing whatever it takes to make this drug benefit something that helps instead of hurts, which is why I am speaking in support of Senator NELSON's amendment.

This amendment will make sure that instead of penalizing our seniors for taking a little more time in choosing a plan, it will accommodate them.

This amendment will make sure that instead of penalizing our seniors for choosing the wrong plan, it will give

them the flexibility to change to the right one.

It is already March 14, just about 2 months before the May 15 deadline for seniors to signup for a plan without being penalized by the late enrollment fee.

And the tune I hear in New Jersey and across the country hasn't changed. Seniors need more time to figure out how the new program works and which drug plan is best for them.

And it isn't just the seniors that need more time—let's not forget that the Federal Government needed more time, too.

As a matter of fact, when the new drug plan was implemented, New Jersey, like many other States, stepped up to the plate to provide emergency drug coverage to ensure that no one went without the lifesaving drugs they needed.

They did not do it because that was planned; they did it because it was the right thing to do. They did it to make sure that there was no loss of life or emergency hospitalization due to the inability for individuals to get their lifesaving and life-enhancing drugs.

The Federal Government dropped the ball, and our States picked it up. While the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid have agreed to reimburse New Jersey and other States for their emergency coverage costs, our States still haven't seen a check, and it will probably be a while until they.

I think our seniors deserve the same flexibility and understanding granted to our Government.

We have a responsibility in Washington to ensure that the initial confusion and problems with implementation do not go any farther.

Our seniors should not be punished for the shortfalls of this new drug benefit. It is an issue of fairness. It is about keeping your word, about being accountable. And today we have the opportunity to give our seniors the much needed extension of time and flexibility they need to choose a plan.

I voted against the Medicare Modernization Act at the time because I didn't think it would provide adequate assistance, and I have been sorry to see that the implementation has not gone as promised.

However, this is the prescription drug plan we have, and we must do everything we can to make it as helpful and beneficial as possible.

For that reason, I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting Senator NELSON's amendment. It is the least we can do to make things right.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, has all time been yielded back on the other side on this amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been consumed.

Mr. CONRAD. All time has been consumed. I am prepared to yield back the time on my side on this amendment so we can then go to Senator MURRAY so she can respond on Senator SANTORUM's amendment.

Mr. GREGG. That is fine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask after we complete the Santorum debate we move to your amendment on avian flu and then that be followed by—you have another amendment?

Mr. CONRAD. We have an amendment by Senator WYDEN, or Senator BYRD, that is next in the queue. I think Senator WYDEN is our next amendment, and we will be prepared to go to that.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent that after we complete the Santorum amendment we go to the Conrad amendment on avian flu, and then we go to the Wyden amendment on Medicare.

Mr. CONRAD. Let's reserve on that one until I make certain.

Mr. GREGG. Other than that, go to yours.

Mr. CONRAD. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3050

Mr. CONRAD. How much time is left on the amendment of Senator SANTORUM?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The opposition on that amendment has the full 15 minutes available.

Mr. CONRAD. I yield the full 15 minutes to the Senator from Washington for her use, or anybody she would designate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am here because the Senator from Pennsylvania came to the floor this morning and offered an amendment on funding for Community Development Block Grant Programs. First of all, I am delighted that the other side recognizes that the assumption in this budget, to cut \$1 billion from Community Development Block Grant Programs, is absolutely unacceptable. Their assumption is absolutely accurate.

Across our country today, mayors and other community leaders are up in arms about the billion-dollar cut to Community Development Block Grant Programs that is in this budget, on top of what I might remind all of my colleagues was the \$500 million cut from last year.

We all know these essential programs. They are essential for housing, an absolutely critical part of our infrastructure, making sure we help develop many of our neighborhoods across this country with that critical seed money that brings those communities back up to standard and makes sure people have adequate housing while it creates jobs and economic development in communities across our country. Robbing those communities of those funds right now when our country is struggling to get back on its feet is the

wrong thing to do, and the Santorum amendment recognizes that.

Here is my problem. Last night I was on the floor of the Senate. I offered a real amendment to restore the funding for Community Development Block Grant Programs. It provides \$1.3 billion, and it does it by adding real money to the budget amendment by closing corporate loopholes. The amendment offered by Senator SANTORUM is simply a "let's not worry, be happy until after the election" amendment and doesn't provide one dollar.

How do I know that? I keep hearing the other side go to the floor and—whether it is veterans or Community Development Block Grant Programs or defense—say we are going to take money out of function 920. I went to the budget resolution book and I looked up 920 to see how much money was left. I was astounded to find out there is no money in function 920. In fact, they are half a billion dollars in the hole right now.

I see the ranking member, Senator CONRAD, on the floor. If he wouldn't mind, I wanted to ask him a question because he knows this budget better than anybody.

I ask, through the Chair to the ranking member, am I wrong, in looking at this budget resolution, that the Republican Members are coming to the floor offering amendments to pay for funding for CDBG or veterans or defense, when there is no money? I ask my colleague if he could respond?

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, unfortunately the Senator is completely correct. There is no money in function 920. The Senator is absolutely correct that when we started this process, function 920 was \$500 million in the hole.

I guess what is even more remarkable is we have now had \$10.5 billion of additional funding supposedly covered by function 920 when there never was any money to begin with.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask my colleague, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, then am I to assume that function is now \$11 billion in the hole? And we are hearing our colleagues on the other side say: Don't worry, be happy; simply take it out of the function where there is no money? I ask my colleague, the ranking member on the Budget Committee, is that real?

Mr. CONRAD. No, it is not real. What is happening now—I must say my colleagues on the other side have got an increasing habit of spending money that doesn't exist. We started out with function 920 having no money, in fact, being \$500 million in the hole. They have now passed amendments that take another \$10.5 billion out of a function that has no money. What will the practical effect be? The practical effect will be an across-the-board cut in all the domestic discretionary accounts. What are they? It will cut defense, it will cut homeland security, it will cut law enforcement. That is what is really happening.

It is the difference between doing something and acting like you are doing something but not doing it. The fact is, as to the amendments they have offered, before they offered them there was \$873 billion available to the appropriators for the domestic accounts. When all their amendments are finished, the appropriators will have—guess what—\$873 billion, not a nickel more. So this is all a sham. It is creating funding that does not exist. The Senator is correct. The amendment that she offered really did offer new funds, additional funds to buttress the community development block grant.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, that sounds completely irresponsible to me, to send a false promise by some kind of sham vote that you are supporting veterans or Community Development Block Grant Programs or all the other programs that we hear from the other side. I heard the Senator from Pennsylvania say this will just tell the Appropriations Committee that this Senate says you are to spend that money.

I am the ranking member on the Transportation-HUD subcommittee. We are already looking at a transit cut of \$100 million, an Amtrak cut, which I know the Senator from Pennsylvania cares about, a cut of \$394 million, and the FAA is cut by \$561 million, a safety factor.

I say to my colleague from North Dakota, I am completely worried about the irresponsible message that these amendments are sending and the sham that they are. I heard last night when I offered my amendment, the chairman of the Budget Committee said we were raising taxes to pay for our amendments on this side.

I want to ask this of the ranking member on the Budget Committee. My amendment I am offering today is to restore Community Development Block Grant Programs at a real, significant number. The \$1 billion cut in the budget is irresponsible. Trying to pay for it out of sham money that is not there is irresponsible. We are asking for \$1.3 billion by closing corporate tax loopholes. I heard those on the other side say that is raising taxes. I know my colleague, who happens to be the ranking member, who happens to be one of the most fiscally responsible Members on this side, is also a member of the Finance Committee. I would like to ask him, through the Chair, how he would respond to that being a tax increase.

Mr. CONRAD. I do not believe it is a tax increase, to require people to pay taxes that are legitimately owed and due now that they are failing to pay.

We could easily pay for the amendment of the Senator by shutting down two sham operations. Let me describe them. One is American companies and American wealthy investors—this will be hard to believe, but this is really going on—buying sewer systems in Europe, depreciating them on their books to reduce their taxes in America, and leasing back those sewer systems to

European cities so that they can run them. Shutting down that scam, is that a tax increase? I don't think so.

Let me describe one other. The other day my colleague showed an office building in the Cayman Islands, a five-story office building that is the home to 12,700 companies. I say that is a remarkable building. That is a real smart building, to be able to house 12,700 companies.

What is really going on? What is really going on is a giant tax scam. They say they are doing business in the Cayman Islands. They are not doing any business in the Cayman Islands. They have a file clerk in this building who takes their financial records so they can claim they are doing business there. Why do they want to be doing business in the Cayman Islands when they are really not doing business in the Cayman Islands? Because the Cayman Islands is a tax haven. It is a place where you can show your profits and not pay taxes.

We could pay for your amendment five times over by shutting down those two scams alone. That is not a tax increase. That is stopping a tax scam.

I might say, of the the amendments that have been passed so far that have been theoretically funded by section 920, we had an amendment to increase defense by \$3 billion. That was funded out of section 920 when 920 had no money. We passed an amendment for veterans, supposedly to increase funding for veterans by \$823 million, funded out of section 920 when section 920 has no money.

We funded an increase in education by \$2 billion out of function 920 when there is not any money. We had border security this morning, and \$2 billion was supposedly paid for out of function 920 when we all know there is no money in 920. So what will happen is there will be across-the-board cuts and they will cut defense, they will cut homeland security, they will cut law enforcement, and cut everything else. The fact is there is no new money to pay for any of them.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member for clarifying that. I think it is important for all of us to understand that.

These votes we take today will have real consequences. How do I know that? Not just because of the respect I have for the ranking member and his explanation, because this is exactly what happened on this floor last year when the Senators on the other side of the aisle offered a "don't worry, be happy" amendment to restore funding for community development block grants, critical money for neighborhood restoration, for low-income housing for our communities across the country.

Do you know what happened when we got to Appropriations? We didn't have the flexibility because our subcommittee also has to fund Amtrak, airlines, transit, and other housing programs. There was no way to do it

despite what the Senate voted on. They ended up having to cut \$.5 billion from the community development block grants.

It is a sham to me to watch these amendments march through here on an account that has no money, that is deficit spent already, and try to sell to their constituents that we are doing something about it when every Senator on this floor knows we ran into a train wreck last year which lasted well into this year on the Appropriations bills. Who was hurt? Not the Senators who voted for it, but our neighbors and friends, mayors and city councils and people on the ground across this country who are trying very desperately today to try make sure that the most important citizens have critical housing infrastructure, that we create jobs, that we have economic development, and that our communities become strong again.

I have said time and time again on this floor that we need to make our country strong again. The most important way we can do it is to invest real dollars in our infrastructure. The CDBG Program is one of the best ways to do that. Every Senator here knows it. The votes we will take later today will be for sham accounts or a real vote. And when will it count? Next fall, when our friends and neighbors see the reality of these amendments and the budget impact on it.

I will conclude by saying that I have been around my State talking to many mayors, talking to many community developers, hearing story after story about how our communities have taken this small amount of money from the Federal Government and invested it wisely, created jobs, created housing, improved the lives of our citizens.

I know this CDBG cut, if we don't pass real money, will mean that Pennsylvania will lose \$46 million in funding. It means Minnesota will lose \$15 million in funding. In my home State, it means \$16 million. Those are not just items on a budget; those are real dollars that make a difference in the lives of our friends and neighbors and communities across the country.

This afternoon we will have an opportunity to cast votes for a real amendment—the Murray amendment—that restores funding and makes sure our Appropriations Committee has the allocation that will allow us to fund the CDBG, or we can take a political vote and be happy for a day. But it will not change anyone's life at home, and it will not restore hope and opportunity that this country so desperately needs today.

I thank my colleagues, and I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is regrettable, and it is frustrating, that once again we find ourselves having to speak out on the shortfalls in the budget resolution for key community and economic development programs. The budget before us slashes Federal assistance to distressed and underserved

communities. These cuts are shortsighted, they are ill-advised, and they represent a significant retreat from our longstanding commitment to invest in our Nation's communities.

In just a few weeks, the Senate will again be asked to appropriate tens of billions more to help Iraq. Though the President's request for Iraq funds is once again off the budget so that it avoids our normal budget rules, the Iraq supplemental funding request once again is for real taxpayers' dollars—no less real than the domestic cuts that the Bush-Cheney budget proposes for the priorities of the American people here at home.

That is why I am proud to join Senators MURRAY and SARBANES, as well as 14 more of our colleagues—17 of us in all—in offering an amendment to the fiscal year 07 budget resolution to provide for an increase of \$1.3 billion to restore the community development block grants, or CDBG, to the fiscal year 04 level of \$4.3 billion. We fully pay for the increase in funds by closing egregious tax loopholes that more than 90 Members of this Chamber have already gone on record in support of closing.

Our amendment is supported by those who know best how effective and important this program is to America's communities. The list of endorsements includes the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, the National Conference of Black Mayors, the National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies, the National Association for County Community and Economic Development, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the Council of State Community Development Agencies, and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation. I ask unanimous consent that a letter from these groups in support of our amendment be printed in the RECORD.

The CDBG Program is the centerpiece of the Federal Government's efforts to help States and localities meet the needs of low-income communities. CDBG funds vital housing rehabilitation, supportive services, public improvements, and economic development projects in communities across the Nation. It serves more than 1,100 entitlement communities, urban counties and States, and more than 3,000 rural communities. These investments help change the face of our communities for the better and help improve the standards of living of Americans across the Nation, right where they live, in their communities.

CDBG is one of the most effective Federal domestic programs helping to revitalize neighborhoods, and it has a proven record of results. For example, in 2005, Vermont used CDBG grants to rehabilitate 771 units of affordable housing and to help create or preserve more than 500 jobs, directly helping to raise the standard of living in Vermont's communities. There are hundreds of similar stories across the Nation, but

in each of them the message is the same: CDBG funds are critical building blocks for improving our communities, our neighborhoods, and our economy.

The CDBG formula allocation was \$4.41 billion in 2001. Since then it has decreased by \$670 million, or 15.2 percent, with a 5-percent cut in fiscal year 05 and a 10-percent cut in fiscal year 06. The budget resolution for the coming year would further reduce the formula funding by 25 percent, cutting the formula allocation by over a third in just 3 years. Communities that benefit from CDBG will be devastated if further cuts in funding are made to this program.

I recently led a bipartisan letter with Senator COLEMAN to the Budget Committee attesting to the effectiveness of CDBG and urging that it be funded at \$4.3 billion in the coming fiscal year. Fifty-three Members of the Senate from both sides of the aisle joined me in this letter, which I ask to have printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1)

Mr. LEAHY. I wish to take a moment to explain the differences between the Murray-Sarbanes-Leahy CDBG amendment and the amendment offered by Senators SANTORUM and COLEMAN. The amendment we offer facilitates restoring these CDBG funds by increasing the budget cap by closing tax loopholes that the Senate has already supported closing, in previous votes. This, in turn, makes real money available to the Appropriations Committee to be able to spend for next year.

Increasing the cap is important because the budget resolution we are considering assumes domestic spending will be capped at the same level as the President's request. Simply put, the budget resolution assumes that funding for CDBG will be reduced by the same amount as the president has proposed, which would be a cut of \$1 billion from fiscal year 06 levels.

A separate amendment offered by our colleagues, Senator SANTORUM and Senator COLEMAN, also supports an increase of funding for CDBG, but it would do so by asking the Appropriations Committee to impose across-the-board cuts on all other domestic programs.

Speaking as an appropriator, I can tell you that all their amendment will do if it passes is to tell the Appropriations Committee that the Senate supports CDBG. But that will not be enough to guarantee that the committee will hear and provide the Transportation-Treasury-HUD, TTHUD, Appropriations Subcommittee with a higher allocation to increase funding for CDBG.

My colleagues should note that the Santorum-Coleman amendment is the same as the CDBG amendment that passed last year. However, because it provided no additional funding to the Appropriations Committee, the TTHUD Subcommittee received an allocation

that was inadequate to fund all of the programs within its jurisdiction. CDBG was the program that was on the chopping block, suffering cuts of more than \$400 million.

So if my colleagues want to simply signal their support for CDBG funding to the Appropriations Committee, then they should vote for the Santorum-Coleman message amendment. Unfortunately, if they choose to do that and that amendment passes at the expense of our amendment, they will find that when it comes time to write the TTHUD appropriations bill, they will have failed to protect this important program from further cuts.

The choice is clear. Those who want to vaguely express support for the CDBG Program can support the other amendment, which is a nice sentiment, like a Candygram. But for those who also really want to get the job done, I urge support of our amendment.

I challenge each Member to go back to their States and to take stock of the benefits that communities have reaped through CDBG investments. I challenge each Member to visit with their local community action groups and hear how they use the community services block grant to support the neediest in their communities. These programs fill a real need and have proven results.

A cut of \$1 billion in Federal funds, which is proposed in this budget resolution, will result in the loss of at least \$9 billion in matching funds from local and State governments and nonprofit and private sector investments. I fail to see the wisdom in dismantling programs that are so vital to our communities.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of the Murray-Sarbanes-Leahy amendment and express their real support for these important programs.

EXHIBIT 1

MARCH 14, 2006.

DEAR SENATOR: The undersigned organizations thank you for joining 52 of your colleagues in signing a letter (attached) to the Budget Committee leadership in support of a budget allocation sufficient to fund the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program at \$4.3 billion for FY 2007. The resolution approved by the Senate Budget Committee last Friday would not allow for such a funding level. In fact it adopts the funding level proposed in the President's FY 2007 budget, which cuts CDBG formula grants by an additional \$1 billion over this year's \$3.71 billion. Today the Senate will consider alternative amendments to the budget resolution to increase CDBG funding. We support a Murray/Leahy/Sarbanes amendment to increase funding for the CDBG program by increasing the overall discretionary cap. It is offset by closing corporate tax loopholes, an approach that has had overwhelming support by a bipartisan group of Senators. This is the only way that the Appropriations Committee can increase CDBG funding because it means additional dollars. Reluctantly, we cannot support an amendment by Senators Santorum and Coleman that increases funding for CDBG paid for by an across-the-board cut in other domestic programs (Function 920). This amendment is similar to an

amendment offered by Senator Coleman last year that passed the Senate. In spite of this, the final FY 2006 appropriations bill cut CDBG formula grants by 10 percent.

We strongly urge you to vote for the Murray/Sarbanes/Leahy amendment that would allow appropriators to restore the CDBG formula amount to the FY 2004 funding level. Thank you for your continued support of the CDBG program and the good work it does in our nation's urban, suburban and rural areas.

Sincerely,

National Association of Counties.

National League of Cities.

National Conference of Black Mayors.

National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies.

National Association for County Community and Economic Development.

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.

Council of State Community Development Agencies.

Enterprise.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation.

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, March 8, 2006.

Hon. JUDD GREGG,

Chairman, Committee on the Budget,

U.S. Senate.

Hon. KENT CONRAD,

Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget,

U.S. Senate.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GREGG AND RANKING MEMBER CONRAD: As you near consideration of the FY 2007 Budget Resolution, we urge the Budget Committee to oppose the budget proposal to cut funding for the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Program by nearly \$1 billion, or 25 percent. Instead, we urge the Budget Committee to maintain the Federal government's commitment to community development programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and support a budget allocation of \$4.3 billion in Function 450 for CDBG.

The communities that have benefited from CDBG will be devastated if the HUD proposal to cut funding is enacted. CDBG serves more than 1,100 entitlement communities, urban counties and states, and more than 3,000 rural communities nationwide. It is the centerpiece of the Federal government's efforts to help states and localities meet the needs of low-income communities. The Program funds vital homeownership, housing rehabilitation, public improvements, public services and economic development projects in communities nationwide. It also supports community-based organizations and the crucial work they do to deliver human services and rebuild neighborhoods.

CDBG is one of the most effective Federal domestic programs to revitalize neighborhoods with proven results. Over 95 percent of the FY 2005 CDBG funding went to activities principally benefiting low- and moderate-income persons. Twenty-eight percent of CDBG funds supported housing activities in distressed communities, 24 percent supported public improvements, 15 percent went to the provision of public services, and 7 percent supported economic development activities. In FY 2005, CDBG housing projects assisted over 166,000 households, including financial assistance to new homeowners and rehabilitation assistance to the elderly and other existing homeowners. Economic development programs benefiting from CDBG last year created or retained over 91,000 full-time jobs. CDBG also has a strong record in business retention: CDBG has ensured that over 80 percent of the businesses assisted through the program were still in operation after three years.

The CDBG formula allocation was funded at \$4.41 billion in FY 2001. Since then, the

formula allocation has decreased by \$670 million, or 15.2 percent, with a five percent cut in FY 2005 and a 10 percent cut in FY 2006. The FY 2007 HUD budget would reduce the formula funding by an additional 25 percent, cutting the formula allocation by over a third in just three years.

In light of these drastic cuts, communities have struggled to continue their programs and have discontinued critical projects for low- and moderate-income persons. We therefore ask you to reject the proposed cut and ask you to support \$4.3 billion in funding for the CDBG Program.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you to ensure that communities across the country can provide good jobs, affordable housing, and public services to meet the needs of all Americans.

Sincerely,

Norm Coleman; Tim Johnson; Mel Martinez; Byron L. Dorgan; Dianne Feinstein; Barbara A. Mikulski; Patrick Leahy; Deborah Ann Stabenow; Daniel K. Akaka; Frank Lautenberg; Paul S. Sarbanes; Robert Menendez; John D. Rockefeller IV; Thomas R. Carper; Russell D. Feingold; Mary L. Landrieu; Joe Lieberman; Tom Harkin; Barack Obama; Susan Collins; Richard Durbin; Conrad Burns; David Vitter; Max Baucus; George V. Voinovich; Maria Cantwell; Jeff Bingaman; Bill Nelson; James M. Jeffords; Blanche L. Lincoln; Mark Pryor; Barbara Boxer; Jack Reed; Mark Dayton; Lincoln D. Chafee; Patty Murray; Carl Levin; Saxby Chambliss; Hillary Rodham Clinton; Charles E. Schumer; Ron Wyden; Arlen Specter; Johnny Isakson; Mike DeWine; Olympia J. Snowe; Joseph R. Biden; John F. Kerry; Christopher J. Dodd; James M. Talent; Christopher S. Bond; Edward M. Kennedy; Herb Kohl; Rick Santorum.

• Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for Senator SANTORUM's amendment to restore budget cuts to the Community Development Block Grant Program, or CDBG. I was proud to sponsor a similar amendment during last year's budget, and today I am pleased to work with my good friend from Pennsylvania to restore CDBG funding in this year's budget.

I am also pleased to have worked with the Senator from Vermont, Senator LEAHY, in leading a bipartisan coalition of 53 Senators this year in sending a message to the Senate Budget Committee expressing our strong commitment to CDBG and reminding folks that cities from Montpelier to Minneapolis need CDBG to create economic opportunity and to grow jobs.

When we consider the budget, there are always a lot of tough choices to be made. We need to be fiscally responsible, and this is a fiscally responsible budget. We need to look at the myriad of Federal programs and ask ourselves, does the program work? Is it cost-effective? Is it achieving its goals?

In the case of CDBG, the answer is yes, yes, and yes. CDBG was enacted in 1974 and has been assisting America's communities for 30 years. It is a public-private partnership that helps State and local government address community development challenges, including infrastructure and housing. Over the first 25 years, it has created 2 million

jobs and contributed in excess of \$129 billion to the Nation's gross domestic product. Dollar for dollar there is no better initiative to help States and localities undertake important economic development activities than the Community Development Block Grant Program.

CDBG is not some abstract community and economic development program but rather one that provides practical and long-lasting individual and community wide benefits.

CDBG success stories abound in every State—just ask all the local mayors who are visiting our offices this week. They will tell you that CDBG is the lifeblood of community development.

As a former mayor, I know first hand the importance of the CDBG program. While mayor of St. Paul, CDBG provided funding that helped make the Main Street Program—a downtown economic revitalization program—a success.

However my city of St. Paul is just one of many small and large examples of CDBG's success in Minnesota.

In the city of Moorhead, CDBG has provided critical affordable housing and rehabilitation assistance to the city's low and moderate income families. By way of example, CDBG funding has enabled Moorhead to provide energy, electrical and structural repairs to John and Avis Pearson both senior citizens with a combined income of \$25,000. CDBG funding has also helped to revitalize Romkey Park, a formerly blighted area of the city, through the rehabilitation of run down apartments.

In Anoka County, a major suburb of the twin cities, CDBG has provided funding for the replacement of dilapidated mobile homes and the redevelopment of the city of Centerville. These are the sorts of projects that improve the quality of life not just for those least well-off but for the entire community by making it a more attractive place to live and do business in.

Then there is the small town of Brewster which was awarded a one-time CDBG grant a few years ago. Thanks to that grant, Brewster was able to revitalize a run down part of the town and in turn attract the Minnesota Soybean Processor, which led to the creation of 40 jobs. The company has now also opened a biodiesel division, which now employs additional workers.

Despite the longstanding Federal, State and local bipartisan support for this program and its long record of achievement, the future of CDBG is in serious jeopardy given the President's budget proposal to reduce funding by \$1 billion to \$2.7 billion. Since fiscal year 2001, the program has endured a 15.2 percent reduction. In my home State, funding has steadily declined during the past several years with funding decreasing from \$68.4 million in fiscal year 2004 to \$58.5 million for the current fiscal year. At the President's proposed funding level, Minnesota would

receive approximately \$43.7 million for fiscal year 2007 or a 36 percent reduction from the fiscal year 2004 level.

I came to the Senate promising to be Minnesota's mayor in Washington. As a mayor, I know that CDBG works, and as a Senator, I am proud to support this program and urge my colleagues to support the Santorum amendment, which would provide the funding necessary for the program to effectively assist States and localities.●

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 10 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. I yield it. I thank the President.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1 o'clock today the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the Murray amendment No. 3363, to be followed by 2 minutes of debate and a vote in relation to the Santorum amendment No. 3050; provided further that following the vote on the Santorum amendment, the Senate recess until 3 p.m. in order for the Senate to proceed to the House for the joint meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I have no intention of objecting, I want to clarify what the distinguished chairman and ranking member said—and they have been very helpful. My understanding is that we go to the Conrad amendment after that, the avian flu amendment. It is my understanding per the agreement between the chairman and ranking minority member that after the Conrad amendment has been discussed, we would next go to the Snowe-Wyden amendment.

Is that the understanding of the chairman and the ranking minority member?

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, actually there will be another amendment dealing with the avian flu by Senator BURR, and then we would go to the Wyden-Snowe amendment.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, is there a time limit for these amendments?

Mr. GREGG. They are all 15 minutes.

Mr. WYDEN. That would mean that somewhere in the vicinity of a half hour or 40 minutes or so we would deal with it.

Mr. GREGG. The Wyden-Snowe amendment would be up sometime around 11:25.

Mr. WYDEN. Without being argumentative, it is the Snowe-Wyden amendment, but we are talking about the same thing.

I thank both the chairman and the ranking minority member.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I wish to claim the remainder of the time on the Santorum amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 9½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GREGG. I thank the Chair.

This discussion which recently occurred between the Senator from Washington and the Senator from North Dakota—

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a moment? It has been brought to my attention that these amendments which we have in train, while we have an agreement they would be 15-minute amendments, that has not been agreed to in a unanimous consent agreement.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendments we have outlined so far—the Conrad amendment, the Burr amendment, the Wyden-Snowe, and if there is an agreement from our side in response to Wyden-Snowe, they will all be 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, without second degrees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. I understand I have 9 minutes. Good.

The discussion which just occurred between the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from Washington is a discussion which reflects the difference between our views and how you should budget. Essentially what the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from Washington said is we should break the cap, we should spend additional money, and we should raise taxes. Their approach to budgeting is to tax and spend. Our approach, on the other hand, has been to say if there is a priority which the Senate feels is a high priority, whether it is veterans' benefits or CDBG—and there will be other amendments like these—that the Senate should declare there is a priority and set up a process where other programs will have to be reduced in order to pay for that program within the cap. The Senator from North Dakota correctly referred to it as an across-the-board cut.

Section 920 is a technical event. It does not have money in it, and it never has. But when you identify a 920 expenditure, it creates a mechanism where another program activity would be cut across the board.

That is the philosophical difference between our parties.

This budget increases the size of Government from last year to next year by over \$100 billion. That is the growth in this budget—over \$100 billion. The growth in the discretionary account will be about \$30 billion under this budget. Those are huge numbers of growth. That is expanding the Government in a very dramatic way and a very significant way, much more so than I would personally wish to do. I wish to see us control, for example, entitlement spending a little more aggressively around here, which is the

majority of growth. But the fact is that is the growth.

What the Democratic proposals are saying—there have been innumerable ones—is we should grow Government even more, we should expand Government even more, and then we should raise taxes to pay for that. The traditional Democratic approach to Government is basically no end to the size of Government. There is no end to the amount of taxes they are willing to raise.

And this argument that they are going to use loopholes, I have to say, is a little shallow. There was this loophole around here called Customs fees which would be used to pay for new spending around here 45 different times. People said we are going to take it out of Customs fees, and then they offset it because they didn't get a budget point of order against it.

This building in the Caymans is the new Customs fee. The simple fact is if you eliminated all the loopholes which they are talking about—they may or may not be loopholes; I certainly think some of them sound legitimate—that would be \$11 billion you would raise over 5 years, all of them. They have proposed \$133 billion in new taxes. So they are \$121 billion short.

Where is that going to come from? That is going to come from increasing maybe the death tax, increasing rates, and increasing taxes on working families, on small businesses, so they can expand Government. That is the difference of opinion which we have.

We don't believe that is the way you control the size of Government, to grow it and then raise more taxes to pay for it. We believe the way to control the size of Government is to set a hard spending level, which we have done, \$873 billion, and hold that, and then within that spending level set priorities.

A lot of amendments come through here saying what the priorities should be. I think they are fairly reasonable; some aren't. The fact is they will all have to be shoehorned under that hard spending cap as long as we maintain that spending cap, as we have done so far in this budget process.

But every amendment offered so far from the other side of the aisle has been a spending amendment which has broken that spending cap—increase the size of Government; grow the Government; then raise taxes to pay for it, representing that it is a corporate loophole closing, which it can't be because they have already gone well beyond the estimates that are reflected in those loopholes which they allege exist.

There is a difference of opinion here. We happen to think we are doing it the right way by setting the priorities under the cap. They think they are doing it the right way by growing the size of Government beyond the spending cap and then paying for it with tax increases on working Americans. It is a difference of opinion.

I yield the remainder of our time on the Santorum amendment and we can move on to the Conrad amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized for the Conrad amendment.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, before I go to the Conrad amendment, I will take 5 minutes off the resolution.

The Senator is correct; we are now talking about the fundamental differences between us. We believe you ought to pay for your spending. We believe we ought to pay the bills we are generating. We believe on the Democratic side that you ought to match your spending with your revenue so you are not increasing the debt.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle have taken a distinctly different position. Their position is you increase spending. The Senator has identified the increased spending in his own budget, but he will not raise the revenue to cover his spending. He won't make the hard choices. He won't cut his spending to match the revenue he is willing to raise, and he will not raise revenue to cover his increases in spending.

The result is the debt is mounting dramatically because our friends on the other side of the aisle refuse to pay the bill. They want to spend the money, but they do not want to pay for it.

When I grew up, common sense told you, responsibility told you, that you pay your bills. You pay your bills. If you don't have the money, you don't spend the money. That is the way I was raised.

Here is what is happening.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. No, I will not. I had a chance to listen and now I will have a chance to answer.

Mr. GREGG. Do we know how long we are going with this little aside?

Mr. CONRAD. I don't know until I have completed my thought.

Here is what is happening with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Here is what is happening to the budget. The debt is going up, up, and away. Every year under this budget plan they are going to add to the debt. Here it is. We have a 5-year budget plan out here and they are going to add to the debt \$680 billion in 2007; \$656 billion in 2008; \$635 billion in 2009; \$622 billion in 2010; \$662 billion in 2011, because they won't pay the bills.

They are running up the debt of this country in a way that is unprecedented, which risks our economic security, which risks our national security, and it is utterly reckless and it is irresponsible. This budget is going to lead to interest rate increases. It will hurt the economy. It is going to endanger our national security.

The Senator is entirely right. We have a fundamental difference in view about how to handle the fiscal affairs of our country. We believe on our side if you want to spend the money, pay for it. That is what we have done with

our amendments. When we have sought to increase funding or eliminate the cuts that the President's budget proposes—for example, the President's budget proposes cutting education \$2 billion. We do not believe it is right to cut the budget of education \$2 billion. However, we also do not believe it is right just to put it on the charge card, run the debt up—we paid for it.

The Senator talked about the amendments we offered in committee. He said we spent \$126 billion. Yes, we did. And we raised the money, more than enough money, to pay for it. We raised \$133 billion. The Senator says over and over that we increased the taxes to do it. No, we did not. We paid for it by, No. 1, closing the tax gap—the difference between what is owed and what is being paid. That gap now is \$350 billion a year. That is no tax increase, to insist that people pay what they owe.

Now the other side says there is not the money in the tax gap to pay for that. Yes, there is. The Revenue Commissioner testified we could recover \$50 billion to \$100 billion a year by getting companies and individuals to pay what they legitimately owe. That is just a fraction of the tax gap.

I yield myself an additional 5 minutes off the resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 5 minutes and gives himself an additional 5 minutes.

Mr. GREGG. What is the regular order?

Mr. CONRAD. The Senator is recognized and the Senator continues to hold the floor, and I have an additional 5 minutes I have granted myself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The consent order to go to amendments does not preclude yielding time off the resolution. That is what is occurring now—time off of the resolution from the Senator's time.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we also paid for our amendments by closing corporate loopholes.

The Senator says there wasn't the money in corporate loopholes to cover the spending we have provided. That is not true. In fact, we have taken a corporate loophole closing this body has previously passed and used it to fund high priorities such as money for education, such as money for veterans.

How has the other side done it? They have offered a series of amendments to add more spending, but they have taken it out of a function that does not have any money in it. They have raised money for defense, but they took it out of function 920, which does not have a dime in it. They said they raised spending on defense \$3 billion. There is no money in the fund from which they say they are taking the money.

It is right here in the budget book, page 29. Go to function 920. Here it is. It says function 920 is \$500 million in the hole. That is before they increased defense spending by \$3 billion and supposedly took it from function 920. That is before this morning, when they took \$2 billion to supposedly strengthen our

borders. They took it out of function 920, where there is no money. It was \$500 million in the hole.

The Senator is exactly right. This does define the differences between our parties. We think we ought to pay for the spending; the other side just wants to put it on the charge card, run up the debt. They have become a party of borrow and spend, borrow and spend, spend and borrow, run up the debt. That is exactly what they are doing today. They are running up the debt of this country in a way that is reckless, that is radical and should be stopped. That is why we are going to urge our colleagues to vote against this budget when the opportunity comes.

Let me go back to exactly what is happening. This chart shows graphically the dramatic runup in debt in this country. When this President came to office, the debt of the country was \$5.8 trillion; that was the end of his first year. Today, the end of this year, it will be \$8.6 trillion. If this budget is agreed to, it will be \$11.8 trillion. They will have doubled the debt with this policy of borrow and spend.

That does define the differences. I am glad we have had a chance to have this discussion.

I understand the Senator from Maryland has an inquiry?

Mr. SARBANES. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I yield an additional 5 minutes to myself off of the resolution.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. SARBANES. This borrow-and-spend policy which the other side of the aisle is pursuing is the direct cause of the runup in the national debt, is it not? This chart which shows the incredible expansion of the national debt is the consequence of pursuing this policy. We are running record budget deficits, is that correct, I ask the Senator?

Mr. CONRAD. This has been the largest deficit in dollar terms in our country's history. But of course the size of the deficit does not equal the increase in the debt; the increases in the debt that these budgets are providing are much more than the deficit. For example, the year we are in now, they say the deficit will be \$371 billion, but the debt is going to go up by about \$650 billion.

Our friends on the other side do not want to pay the bills. They want to spend the money, but they do not want to raise the revenue to cover their spending. That is what is really going on. They are unwilling to cut the spending to match the revenue they are willing to raise, and they are unwilling to raise the revenue to meet their spending. Either way, they will not cut the spending to match the revenue, and they will not raise the revenue to match their spending. The result is they tack it on the debt. Borrow, borrow, borrow.

They say things are getting better. Really? Things are getting better? Here it is. Here is what will happen if this

budget passes. They will add to the debt every year for the next 5 years more than \$600 billion a year until we get to a point of over \$11.8 trillion in debt.

The proof is in the pudding. Later today, they will come before the Senate and ask to raise the debt limit in one fell swoop by \$781 billion—a further confirmation of the policy of this administration and our colleagues, which is a policy of borrow and spend, spend and borrow, borrow, borrow, borrow, run up the debt. That is where we are.

Mr. SARBANES. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield.

Mr. SARBANES. This also reflects or demonstrates a sense of priorities.

To take the amendment we were just considering, the Murray amendment, and then the Santorum amendment, the Murray amendment sought to avoid increasing the deficit by adding money for the community development block grant. All of the State and local governments are petitioning Congress for this. It is desperation time for them. She was prepared to pay for it by closing some corporate tax loopholes, all of which have previously been approved by the Senate, as I understand it.

So in terms of priorities, in effect, we are saying: Support the Community Development Block Grant Program, but pay for it by closing these corporate tax loopholes; that is a higher priority. You do not raise the deficit, and you do not increase the debt by that amount. Is that correct, I ask the Senator?

Mr. CONRAD. The Senator is entirely correct. That does define the differences here.

The Senator from Pennsylvania, on the Republican side, offered an amendment to add \$1.3 billion for community development block grants. But his amendment seeks to fund that amount how? By taking it out of function 920, just as we have had one amendment after another from the other side seeking to fund things out of function 920, where there is no money. They were \$500 million in the hole when we started this process, and they have increased defense \$3 billion. How did they pay for it? By function 920, where there is no money. And then this morning, \$2 billion to strengthen our borders. How did they pay for it? Function 920, where there is no money. They say that is responsible budgeting, that this is the difference which defines our parties. They are exactly right—this is the difference which defines our parties.

When Democrats were in control, we paid down the deficit. We actually were in surplus and, in fact, we were able to stop taking Social Security money to pay other bills. Now, with them taking over, we have reversed course, going from record surpluses to record deficits and even higher running up of the debt.

What they propose with this budget is more of the same—borrow and spend, spend and borrow, put it off, put it on

the charge card, do not worry about it, tell the American people: You can have every tax cut and every spending increase, and you do not have to pay for anything.

I yield myself another 5 minutes off the resolution.

Does the Senator inquire further?

Mr. SARBANES. I inquire of the Senator, when the Bush administration came in in 2001, wasn't the Federal budget in surplus?

Mr. CONRAD. Yes. The Federal budget was in surplus by \$128 billion. In fact, we had a string of surpluses as the Clinton administration during those 8 years brought spending down and revenue up. So we paid our bills. We stopped raiding Social Security. Now it has all been reversed, and we have record deficits with bigger amounts adding to the deficit, and they are taking the Social Security surplus to pay other bills. Under this budget plan, they will take almost \$180 billion of Social Security surplus—money that is not really in surplus; it will all be needed, it will all have to be paid back—and they are taking every dime to pay other bills. Just more of the same—run up the debt, and we will worry about it tomorrow.

At some point, we better start worrying about it today. The result of these policies is that foreign holdings of American debt have exploded, absolutely exploded. It took 224 years to run up \$1 trillion of external debt. That is U.S. debt held by foreigners. This President has more than doubled that amount in just 5 years. It is stunning, but that is what is happening.

The Dubai Ports deal, what is that about? I suggest that part of it is a result of our fiscal policy which is running up these massive debts, increasingly funded by foreigners, so foreigners are holding all these dollars. What are they going to do with them? In part, they are going to buy U.S. assets. They might as well put up a for-sale sign on the country because what is happening is all this money we are borrowing because our friends will not pay the bills, they just want to borrow the money, and the result is we owe Japan \$668 billion and we owe China over \$263 billion. And guess what. They are sitting on all this money. We owe the Caribbean bank centers almost \$100 billion. They take that money. They have to do something with it. What are they doing? They are buying American assets.

So if you like the idea of shipping American jobs overseas, if you like the idea of running up the debt, if you like the idea of going deeper and deeper into the ditch, this budget is the one you ought to vote for because it continues this policy. At some point, this is going to have to come to a screeching halt because the bill is going to come due.

Mr. SARBANES. Will the Senator yield for a question? Isn't more and more of this debt we are running into being held overseas rather than here at

home? Hasn't there been a shift in who holds the debt, so we are becoming increasingly dependent upon strangers to finance this deficit and this debt? Is that correct?

Mr. CONRAD. The Senator is exactly correct. Of the publicly held debt, now almost 50 percent of it is held by foreigners. Isn't that stunning?

Mr. SARBANES. Absolutely stunning.

Mr. CONRAD. It used to be we borrowed the money from ourselves.

Mr. SARBANES. Yes.

Mr. CONRAD. Not anymore. Now we are borrowing from Japan primarily. China is next. Great Britain is third. The Caribbean banking centers are fourth. We owe them \$98 billion. We even owe the South Koreans \$60 billion.

As to our colleagues on the other side, it is fine with them: Keep borrowing the money. Spend the money. Borrow the money. This is the defining difference. I am glad our colleague, the chairman of the committee, made the point that this defines the difference. It certainly does. We do not believe the appropriate policy is to keep running up the debt of the country, to keep borrowing the money, but that is what this budget does.

Mr. SARBANES. Furthermore, doesn't this budget make it clear their prime priority on the other side is to provide these tax cuts, which overwhelmingly benefit the wealthy? The consequence of that is either we run up the deficit and debt or we cut programs that are badly needed across the country, particularly for working people.

So the priority that is being established is tax cuts first and foremost, which upon analysis are seen to benefit—I understand the tax breaks for millionaires that have passed under the Bush administration, the people with more than \$1 million of income each year, amount to \$41 billion in the coming year—\$41 billion. The community development block grant proposal was for \$984 million, one-fortieth of the amount going out in the tax cuts.

So those are the priorities that are being established here—the tax cut first and foremost—and the consequence is, you run up the deficit and cut programs which are badly needed by ordinary citizens all across America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAHAM). The Senator's 5 minutes has expired.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield myself—the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from Maryland took about a half an hour. I took about 5 minutes. So I am going to yield myself 25 minutes to discuss this issue in some depth because it is an important issue. I do believe the characterizations here are interesting but inconsistent with the facts.

The Senator from North Dakota says we are running up the debt. I suppose

you can argue that is true, yes, because we are operating the Government. But the second question would be, Who is running up the size of the Government? That would be probably a more appropriate question. If you look at the Democratic proposals, as they have hit the floor of the Senate, they are running up the size of the Government. That is their goal.

They proposed amendments in committee that increase the size of the Federal Government by \$127 billion. That is a huge expansion of the Federal Government. I give them credit, they pay for it with taxes on the American people, raising them \$133 billion. And they are not tax-loophole closers.

The Senator from North Dakota has claimed: Well, if you just collected taxes that are owed, you might get up to \$100 billion. That may or may not be true, and we are going to try to do something to accomplish that. But as he well knows, CBO will not score that. They score that as zero. So in order to get that \$133 billion, they are going to have to raise taxes on working Americans because loophole closers simply do not generate anything like that. The maximum amount you can score for loophole closers is about \$11 billion. So they are going to have to raise taxes at least \$121 billion on working Americans.

And then the Senator from Maryland says there is \$41 billion out there that you can just take from high-income Americans. If you grab that, well, that is clearly a rate increase and a tax increase. But it is an inaccurate statement. Actually, the high-income Americans today are paying more—paying more—than they have paid at any time in history as a relative burden of taxes. Their number has gone up significantly. In fact, the time when they got the best deal, ironically, was during the Clinton administration.

During the Clinton administration, high-income Americans actually paid less as a percentage of the gross tax burden, total tax burden in America, than at any other time. It is only in the last few years that their percentage of the burden has gone up.

Why is that? Well, it is something called economic activity. When people go out and they work hard and they are being productive, they end up paying more taxes. When tax rates are high, people seek tax shelters, and they hide income, and they invest it in things that give them avoidance of taxes. Some of the things the Senator from North Dakota would like to eliminate I would like to eliminate, too, that are inappropriate. But they also do things that are appropriate to avoid taxes so they do not have to pay that high tax rate.

When you have a capital gains rate of 30 percent, people do not sell their assets. They hold on to them because they do not want to pay all that money to the Federal Government, especially high-income people. So what we have seen is when we cut rates, high-income

people started doing things that generated revenue for the Federal Government, and it also generated a tax burden on them that was higher. They were willing to take that because they were making more money. And it is shown definitively by the revenues we have received as a Federal Government as a result of the cut in the capital gains rate.

Now, the other side of the aisle considers the cut in the capital gains rate to be poison. They think it just benefits the rich and it should not have occurred. They want to repeal it. They tried to put in place pay-go to force the repeal of it, and they have all sorts of ideas for how you eliminate it because this is the rate they see as the problem in America, the capital gains rate being 15 percent instead of what it was. It used to be 30 percent.

What was the effect of cutting capital gains rates? It actually generated huge revenue to the Federal Government. Why? Because people went out and started to undertake economic activity. They went out and sold stock. They went out and sold small businesses. They went out and sold real estate. That generated economic activity, which generated taxes to the Federal Government, taxes which we did not expect to get of \$81 billion. Then they took the money they generated as a result of selling those assets and reinvested it in more productive activity and created more jobs, took more risks. As a result, the economy is growing.

We have had month after month after month of growth in this economy. We created 5 million jobs. We have had, I think, 30 months of growth in this economy. And the 5 million new jobs we have created actually exceeds the combined jobs created in Japan and Europe during that same period of time. That is good economic policy.

Just last month, we created 234,000 jobs. Why? Because we created an atmosphere where people are willing to go out and take a risk, where they are willing to go out, invest their money, take a risk, and create a job as part of taking that risk, and create revenue for the Federal Government because they create income. As a result, the revenues have gone up in this country.

So another chart is pretty dramatic. These are the revenue growths—the yellow lines—in the last few years and what we project out into the future—a 14-percent jump in revenue last year. Now, the other side will say: But that is from a historic low. Yes, it is a historic low, which was driven in large part by the Internet bubble of the late 1990s, the largest bubble in the history of this country or in the world. It was a bigger bubble than the tulip bubble or the South Seas bubble. When the Internet bubble collapsed, we went into recession, and that dropped revenues dramatically. Then we were attacked on 9/11, and that dropped revenues even more.

So the President, with considerable foresight, I would say, decided to cut

taxes before we got deep into the recession. As a result, there was economic activity generated, and that has produced a significant upturn in revenues—one of the most significant upturns in revenue in history.

Now, here is the bottom line of this whole argument: We are reaching a point where we are back to a historic level of what taxes have been in this country. Historically, taxes in this country have represented about 18.4 percent of gross national product. And yes, they dipped well below that because of the Internet bubble and because of the attack on 9/11 and the economic slowdown that occurred. But now they are headed back up because of the economic policies this President has put in place, including creating more incentive for people to go out and be more productive.

So within a year, or maybe a year and a half, we are going to be back to a tax burden in this country which is generating essentially what has been the historic norm, which is about 18.4 percent—18.4 percent—of gross national product, with a Tax Code that does it by saying to people: Go out and take a risk. Create a job. As a result of doing that, give us some more revenue—because there will be more people paying taxes.

But if you look at the Democratic proposals which have come forward under this budget, what they are suggesting is that this tax burden, this historic tax burden of 18.4 percent, is not high enough. The American people are fundamentally undertaxed, they are saying. They have to be taxed more. And Government has to grow more. Government has to grow a lot more. We have to grow Government by \$127 billion more, and then we have to hit people with another \$133 billion in taxes. We will get that tax burden up around 19 or 20 percent of gross national product, maybe get it up to 21 percent, 22 percent. Who knows how high it is going to go. It is going to go as high as they want to spend money. That is the difference between our parties. They believe in expanding the Government and expanding taxes to pay for it.

When our members have come to this floor and suggested there is a priority for CDBGs or there is a priority for veterans, what they have said is they want that money to be spent there, but they are willing to do it under a cap. They are going to control spending on the discretionary side of the ledger.

When the members from the other side have come to the floor and said there is a priority for veterans or there is a priority for CDBG, they have said: We don't want to have to be limited to any spending regime around here. We want to blow that cap. We want to add another \$127 billion to the cost of Government, grow the Federal Government, and we will raise taxes to pay for it.

At least they have integrity on that point. I agree with that. They are say-

ing: Grow Government, grow taxes, take that tax burden over the norm of 18.4 percent. Take it up to 20 percent. Take it up to 19 percent of gross national product. And then take the size of Government and drive it up, too, over 20 percent, 21 percent, 22 percent.

What our people are saying—

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. GREGG. No, I am not going to yield. Your side did not yield to me when you were talking.

What our people are saying is we have priorities, too. We recognize that some things need more money than other things. We are willing to do it within a controlled atmosphere of a spending cap that is \$873 billion. Within that cap, we are going to offer amendments to spend money on this item or that item, and in exchange for that we are going to cut across the board under 920. That is what it does. That is the difference. We are willing to set priorities and limit spending. They are willing to set priorities, increase spending, and raise taxes to pay for it.

This argument that these taxes are going to come out of some nonpenal event to the American people, that it is not going to affect the American people's income, that it is going to come from some corporate loophole or that it is going to come from some Cayman Islands place, is just—well, it is like the Customs fees. Forty-five times we used Customs fees around here to claim we could raise spending. Finally, we actually did use the Customs fees, so we don't hear about them anymore around here. Hopefully, someday we will wipe out the Cayman Islands building so we won't hear about that anymore, either. But in the process, you cannot generate enough revenue from doing that to address the \$133 billion of taxes that are being raised here. The maximum you can generate out of those items is \$11 billion.

So this has been an interesting aside, well discussed, well presented. But I would like to suggest to the Senator from North Dakota that we get on to the amendment process.

Mr. CONRAD. Does the Senator yield?

Mr. GREGG. I am not yielding the floor. I am asking the Senator from North Dakota if he would like to get on with the amendment process. I have not yielded the floor.

Mr. CONRAD. Momentarily—

Mr. GREGG. I yield for a question.

Mr. CONRAD. I am not going to ask a question. I will respond to your question and just say, I think this is a healthy thing. Debate has broken out here, which is a rare occurrence. You have done an excellent job of presenting your view. I have tried to represent our view. I would like to respond briefly to some of the points you have made. Perhaps you would then like to respond briefly to some of mine.

Mr. GREGG. I would suggest, then, that we spend another 6 minutes on

this. You take 3; I take 3. Then we move on to your amendment.

Mr. CONRAD. I wouldn't be prepared in 3 minutes to respond to your very excellent presentation over the last 15. It will take me a little bit of time to respond to these things. I do think it is a healthy debate. It will actually, perhaps, save us time because maybe we can then reduce our wrap-up time at the end of the debate.

Mr. GREGG. I will yield the floor, recognizing that I will probably reclaim it for the amount of time that the Senator from North Dakota uses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I say to my colleague, for whom I have great respect, the chairman of the committee, we have a very real difference. We are highlighting that difference. That is a healthy thing. It is a debate.

Let me respond to something the Senator said. I have the same chart, a little different colors, that looks at the spending and revenue lines of the Federal Government going back to 1980. The red line is the spending line. The green line is the revenue line. This is as a percentage of GDP. What you see is that during the Clinton years, the spending came down as a share of GDP each and every year. The revenue went up. The result was, we stopped deficit spending. We stopped running up the debt. In fact, we were paying down the debt. Then President Bush came into office. The spending went up.

They make the assertion that we are the big spenders, but the fact is, during the Clinton years, spending went down each and every year as a share of gross domestic product. During the Bush years, spending has gone up virtually every year.

On the revenue side of the equation, when President Bush came in, the revenue side of the equation collapsed. The Senator says it collapsed because of economic slowdown, because of the Internet bubble. Yes, in part it did. But he never mentions the tax cuts. Hello? The tax cuts accounted for half of this drop. The result was discretionary spending went up. Why did discretionary spending go up? For defense, homeland security, and rebuilding New York. All of us agreed with that. On a bipartisan basis we agreed to spend more money to respond to the attacks on our country. So spending went up, but the revenue went way down. The result is, more and more deficit, more and more debt.

Here is our fundamental difference. Our Republican friends want to spend the money, but they don't want to pay for it. They don't want to raise the revenue to meet their spending line, and they don't want to reduce their spending to match their revenue line. The result is the debt is skyrocketing.

Here it is. This is the result of their policies. This is what the debt was at the end of President Bush's first year, \$5.8 trillion. We don't hold him responsible for the first year because he was

still under the Clinton budget. But look what has happened since. The President told us he was going to have maximum paydown of the debt. At the end of this year the debt will be \$8.6 trillion. It has gone up, up, and away. And if this budget is approved that our colleagues on the other side have put before us, and the President has put before us, the debt is going to go to \$11.8 trillion. They will have almost doubled the debt.

Our colleagues on the other side have a mistaken notion on the issue of taxes. I would love to cut taxes 50 percent across the board. I would be a huge beneficiary myself if we did that. But what would happen? The debt would go up even more. Since we are borrowing almost half of this debt from abroad, we would be even more in debt to foreigners, the Japanese, the Chinese. Is that what we want to do for our future? I don't think so. I think that weakens us.

Our colleague keeps saying: If you cut taxes, you get more revenue. The only evidence my colleague presents is in one type of tax, capital gains. He doesn't want you to look at the whole revenue picture because he knows what I know: Revenue has not gone up with all these tax cuts.

Here is what has happened to total revenue. Remember, he has just talked about a small part of the revenue base, capital gains. But here is total revenue. In the year 2000, total revenue for our country was just over \$2 trillion. The next year it went down. And in that next year, 2001, we had massive tax cuts. What happened to revenue the next year? Did it go up or did it go down? It went down to \$1.85 trillion. How about the next year; did the revenue go up or did it go down? It went down again, to \$1.78 trillion. How about 2004; did the revenue at that point exceed what it was in 2000? No. It was still far below what we got in 2000. It was \$1.88 trillion. We didn't get back to the revenue base of the year 2000 until 2005. Those are the facts. Their idea didn't work. But they can't admit they were wrong. The result is they keep on spending the money, but they won't raise the money to pay for their spending. So what happens? The debt goes up, up, up.

Our colleague said the economy is really humming under their plan. We are seeing modest growth. But let's look in comparison to other times in our history when we were going through an economic recovery. First, median household income has declined for 4 straight years. That is not a good sign. When we look at economic growth and we compare this recovery to previous recoveries and we look at the nine recoveries since World War II, nine periods when we were coming out of a recession, on average in those nine other recoveries, economic growth averaged 3.2 percent. This time it is only 2.8 percent.

In addition, we looked at business investment. We went back and looked at

the nine previous business cycles, the nine recoveries since World War II. That is the dotted red line in terms of business investment. If at this stage in the cycle, we compare it to this recovery, which is the black line, do you know what we find? Business investment is running 62 percent behind the average of the nine previous recoveries. And job creation? They are bragging about job creation. Let me just say, there were 22 million jobs created during the Clinton years. When we compare this recovery to the nine previous recoveries since World War II, again, the dotted red line is the average of the nine previous recoveries—job creation in this recovery is the black line—we are 6.6 million private sector jobs short of the average recovery since World War II.

Again, I go back to the fundamental difference that we have. Our Republican friends have a budget before us that is going to increase the debt over the next 5 years by \$3.5 trillion. That is their plan. Is that what we want to do? Half of it is funded by foreigners. So the bizarre thing they are doing—because this budget increases spending. This is their budget. It increases spending. The chairman has described that. And it cuts taxes, even though we can't pay our bills now. So guess what. We get more debt funded by foreigners, more vulnerability to the country, more money we owe the Japanese, more money we owe the Chinese. And then we wonder why the Dubai Ports deal occurred. There are going to be a lot more Dubai Ports deals under this fiscal plan because, under this fiscal plan, we are going to owe a boatload more of money.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, for the sake of figuring out where we are going, I can never remember who is the junior or senior Senator any longer because the Senator from North Dakota came, went, and came back. How much time do you think Senator DORGAN would like?

Mr. DORGAN. I would like 5 minutes.

Mr. GREGG. Why don't we give 5 minutes to Senator DORGAN, and then I will respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, this has been fascinating. I came in at Senator GREGG's presentation, nearly at a fever pitch, depending on what appears to be the indefensible. But it reminded me of how one argues in court. You take the best you have and then go at it with volume—if possible, as much volume as is possible—and hope some of it sticks. It reminded me a little bit, too, of the message that Gen. George Armstrong Custer received just before they actually got to Harden, MT, with the 7th Cavalry. His scouts came back and said: Things look pretty good up ahead. Things look pretty good.

General Custer got that message. It is the message I heard this morning as I walked onto the floor of the Senate from our colleague, Senator GREGG: Things look pretty good up ahead.

Let's look up ahead for a moment. On page 28 of the resolution that sits on the desks of Members of the Senate, let's look up ahead, see if things look pretty good up ahead. It doesn't matter how many trees you cut down to produce the charts, how much ink you use to create your bar graphs. That doesn't mean a thing. Let's look up ahead just a bit.

In 2011, what is going to happen to this country under the best of circumstances, under the most optimistic circumstances offered by the majority party in their resolution? In 2011, we will be required as a country to borrow over one-half of a trillion dollars. That is how much the debt will increase in 2011. So somebody brings this to the floor of the Senate and says: We have a plan. Our plan is to put our fiscal house in order, and 5 years from now we are going to borrow over half a trillion dollars and we call that order.

I said yesterday, I yearn for the old Republican Party. Both political parties provide grand opportunities for this country, and have for two centuries. They both contribute to the well-being of America and to the building of this great Nation. But there was one thing you could always count on the Republican Party to do, and that is they wore gray suits. They were conservative. They would wear wire rim glasses, and they would look like they just swallowed a lemon. They were very serious. You could always trust them to stand for fiscal responsibility—always. Pay your bills, they would say. Balance your budget. That is what you would count on them for.

That has changed a lot because the new majority party here says this is paying our bills and balancing our budget, page 29. Five years from now, they say, their plan will have us borrow over one-half trillion dollars in that year alone. During the entire 5 years, as my colleague has said, we will borrow over \$3.5 trillion. And that is putting our country back on track? I don't think so.

It is time that even when we look in the mirror we be honest. It is time this Congress be honest with itself. It doesn't take charts, doesn't take the ink on charts. It reminds me of that old western movie line: What are you going to believe, me or your own eyes?

Let me choose to believe my own eyes. Let me choose to believe what is in the most optimistic assessment in this fiscal policy. This country is deep in debt, going deeper in debt. And, by the way, we are going to borrow about \$600 billion this year, and that doesn't include the \$700-plus billion of trade deficit. So we are going to borrow about \$1.3 trillion this year alone, just in this year alone, and we are told: Gee, things are good. Things are good. Just like General Custer's scouts,

things are really good up ahead. They are not. This country deserves the seriousness of purpose on the part of Republicans and Democrats who are willing to stare truth in the eye. The truth is on page 28.

This country is off course, off track, and it is unsustainable. Yes, in trade it is off track. We are shipping jobs overseas at a wholesale rate, we are closing American plants, and we are up to our neck in debt. We are selling America piece by piece, \$2 billion a day, 7 days a week, all year long.

In fiscal policy, we are borrowing and borrowing. My colleague from New Hampshire talks about taxes. I understand the issue of taxation. I especially understand the issue of those who don't want to tax but want to borrow and spend and say let the kids pay for it. That is not conservative. That is a new conservatism that, in my judgment, doesn't do well by this country's future.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, the Senator from North Dakota makes my case. The seriousness of purpose would require that they present a budget, and if they did, they would be presenting a budget that had dramatic tax increases in it and dramatic expansion of the Federal Government, as has been shown by the amendments they have brought to the floor—over \$127 billion of expansion of the Federal Government, over \$133 billion in tax increases.

That is just the start. The senior Senator from North Dakota basically questioned this recovery. I suppose you can always walk around with a dark cloud over your head and claim there is no sunlight when the sun is shining on you. The fact is, this recovery has been pretty good, especially in the context of the fact that we are fighting a war and we have had basically the entire Gulf States wiped out as a result of catastrophic natural events, Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. If we look at some of the issues that affect people the most in this recovery, let's look at the price of homes. They have gone up; there have been historic increases. When that happens, everyone's net worth in America jumps. All homeowners' net worth jumps when the price of homes goes up. So everybody who is a homeowner has a little more of a cushion to their life.

Dividend income has jumped dramatically as a result of the cut in dividends. Why? Because corporations, instead of borrowing and instead of using mechanisms where they reinvest maybe overseas—which seems to upset our colleagues on the other side—have decided to pay out dividends. So people who own stock in this country—the vast majority of Americans, by the way, either directly or through pension funds—are benefiting from the fact that dividend income has jumped radically under this administration.

Unemployment, during a period of fairly significant recession at the beginning of this administration, and a period of war that has been going on

throughout this administration, and a period where the gulf coast has been overwhelmingly hit by an economic downturn as a result of the impact of the catastrophic events of Katrina and Rita, unemployment continues to drop.

In fact, I remember a couple years ago, under this administration, when the other side of the aisle was claiming we weren't creating enough jobs. We don't hear that routine anymore. Jobs are being created at a significantly faster rate than historic norms, and we are seeing a lot of people being employed—5 million jobs added, which is more than the combined increase of Japan and Europe—which, by the way, has a population of about half again as large as ours—over the same period of time.

Productivity growth. This is an important one because it is a function of the tax laws that we put in place. Productivity growth is higher than almost all prior business cycles. We have maintained extremely high productivity growth as a result of the fact that we have created a tax climate where people are having incentive to invest and create jobs, which we have talked about earlier. That is a hugely important factor, something that if you listen to former Chairman Greenspan, who I think is a fair arbiter of economics in this country, he will tell you productivity growth is probably the most important thing. If you can keep that ahead of inflation, you are going to have a robust economy, and we have certainly done that as a result of the policies of this administration.

We have had 17 consecutive quarters of economic growth, economic expansion. That is a very robust recovery under any definition of recovery—17 consecutive months. It may not be as strong as other recoveries, but it is certainly a very strong recovery and something we as a nation should be taking a fair amount of pride in.

That brings us back to the issue of tax policy because if you listen to the other side of the aisle, you would think that revenues were still down as a result of Katrina, as a result of the attack of 9/11, and as a result of the burst of the Internet bubble, and they claim it is as a result of tax cuts. Revenues are not down; they are proceeding to go up. They continue to grow. At least their chart shows they are back to a historic level. That level that they are at is essentially the level they should be at, which is the historic level that we pay taxes as a percentage of gross domestic product. The Federal Government should not be taking more than 18.4 percent of GDP out of the economy for tax purposes. We are growing at a dramatic rate. These bars go up significantly, and they are going to continue to go up significantly because of the fact that we have in place tax policy that encourages economic activity, risk taking, and job creating, which is so critical to the generation of revenue to the Federal Government. So we get back to what is the essence of the de-

bate because I think it needs to be restated.

The essence is this chart—they have their chart, and it is basically the same chart, but we look at them differently. We agree that the chart is the same. The point is this: Revenues are coming back to their historic levels, 18.4 percent of gross national product. Spending, however, is not coming down as much as it should, and it is not coming down not because we have not made a commitment to try to control spending—we have done that. Last year, we passed the first deficit reduction attempt on entitlements in 8 years. We got two votes from the other side of the aisle. There was no attempt to control entitlements from the other side of the aisle last year. There was opposition to spending control there. Then we put into place a cap on spending, and again we didn't get any votes from the other side of the aisle.

What their proposal is, is shown in their amendment, which essentially says we are going to grow the size of Government, grow it above that line where it is now, which is 20 percent; and we are going to raise taxes and grow the revenues well above the 18.4 percent, which is the historic norm. So they are basically saying they are willing to take much more out of this economy to grow the Government, make the Government bigger than what has historically been the case, and they are also willing to take much more in taxes.

We don't think we should go that way. We think we should put into place spending restraint. We would love it if the other side of the aisle would support this. But there is no attempt to support the caps from any amendment offered on the other side of the aisle. Every amendment that has come forward from them has raised the caps, raised the size of Government.

There was no support for entitlement control on the other side of the aisle—none. Well, there were two votes, I am sorry. I respect those votes and I thank them. But the vast majority of the other side of the aisle didn't want to do any entitlement restraint. To the extent we have seen spending go up, it has only gone up in two categories—entitlements and national defense. National defense is something you have to do when you are at war. So when the Senator from the other side of the aisle points to the spending chart going up, he knows and I know that the extent that is discretionary spending, it is 95 percent national defense because that is what we have to do when we are at war.

So if you are going to control the rate of growth of Government, you have to control the discretionary side and the entitlement side. There is no attempt to do that on the other side. There is an attempt to expand it. Yes, the debt goes up. Their argument is that we are expanding debt. Well, that is true because we are fighting a war that we have to pay for and because we

cannot get any support in a bipartisan way to address what is driving the debt most, which is entitlement spending.

The President comes forward with a proposal on Social Security and says everything is on the table. The other side says we won't accept anything. He comes forward with a Medicare proposal. Immediately, the leader on the other side of the aisle said the proposal was inexcusable, even though it was put forward by MEDPAC, an independent organization of health professionals, which suggested you can restrain the rate of growth nominally with a couple of changes.

The same is true of Medicaid. What a battle we had last year to save \$5 billion in Medicaid spending, with over a \$1.2 trillion base, so we took the rate of growth from 40 percent to 40 percent. We didn't even change it. There was opposition every step of the way from the other side.

So it is very hard to give a lot of credibility to the idea that there is a desire to control spending on the other side of the aisle. What this is on the other side of the aisle is shown by this chart, which is to increase spending, increase the size of Government, increase taxes and, as a result, we refer to that as tax and spend, a term which I believe is reasonably accurate in this context.

At this point, I will yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to myself off the resolution. We have heard from the other side that we have proposed additional spending in the committee. Yes, we did. The difference between our spending and the spending the other side offered—and they have offered, repeatedly, amendments to increase spending—is that we paid for ours. We paid for it.

The Senator has a list that shows we offered in committee amendments that have increased spending \$126 billion. Let me explain where almost all of that spending was. One amendment. One amendment to say that veterans of our country should have their spending considered mandatory rather than discretionary—mandatory rather than discretionary. I think most Americans would say spending on veterans is not a discretionary matter.

We asked them to go to war, asked them to put their lives on the line. In many cases, they have come back wounded, injured, and in need of care. Is it discretionary to fund those accounts, to take care of their medical needs? We don't think so. We think it should be on the mandatory side of the ledger. That is scored as \$104 billion of our \$126 billion of spending.

Now, yes, I will look anybody in the eye and say that was spending that was responsible, to keep the promise made to our Nation's veterans. And we paid for it. We didn't just run up the debt the way our colleagues do. Over and over, they have voted for spending. We have shown the lines. Spending has

gone up under this administration. But revenue has gone down. They voted for all the spending, and they voted for all the tax cuts, and the result is the debt is going up, up and away. So they are the party of borrow and spend. Borrow and borrow, spend and spend. They don't want to reduce any spending.

I don't see any amendments that they have offered to cut spending. They offered amendment after amendment to increase spending, but they don't want to pay for it.

The Comptroller General has told us that "continuing on this unsustainable fiscal path will gradually erode, if not suddenly damage, our economy, our standard of living, and ultimately our national security." He is talking about this runup of debt.

I want to conclude. My colleague said they had a deficit reduction plan and they didn't get a single vote from our side for it. He is right. They didn't have any deficit reduction. There is no deficit reduction in their plan. The deficit went up. They passed their plan and the deficit went up. In 2005, the deficit was \$319 billion. They passed their deficit reduction plan without a single Democratic vote. In fact, some on their side voted against it. And now the deficit is going to be \$371 billion.

So the Senator is absolutely correct. We didn't vote for their so-called deficit reduction plan that didn't reduce the deficit; it increased the deficit. And we are not going to vote for this plan that runs up the debt \$600 billion a year each and every year for the next 5 years, taking us to a debt of \$11.8 trillion before the baby boomers ever retire. So that is the difference between the parties.

In terms of economic performance, I say to my colleague, he says that the productivity numbers are a result of the Tax Code. I don't think so. I think the productivity numbers are the result of the hard work of the American people, the ingenuity of the American people, not as a result of the Tax Code. The productivity numbers were going up dramatically when we had the previous Tax Code. So the notion that the Tax Code is the reason for the productivity gains is just imaginary.

If we want to talk about economic performance, in the Clinton administration we got twice as much increase in real average hourly earnings. We got 50 percent more increase in real disposable personal income. And we got 10 times as much job creation. That is with the previous Tax Code.

So it is not the Tax Code that is producing those results. It is the hard work and ingenuity of the American people.

Mr. WYDEN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I will be happy to yield. I say to my colleague, would this be an appropriate time to go to Senator WYDEN's amendment?

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I understand Senator GRASSLEY wishes to respond to Senator WYDEN. That may be the appropriate time. Let Senator WYDEN make his presentation.

Mr. WYDEN. I appreciate that. What Senator SNOWE and I want to do is not spend any taxpayers' money; we want to save some taxpayers' money. I appreciate that. I was here about 45 minutes ago thinking that was the point where we would be in the queue. When Chairman GRASSLEY gets here, we would appreciate the chance to discuss our bipartisan amendment.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I say to the Senator, this would be the appropriate time for him to make his presentation, and we can go forward with the amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3004

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, with the consent of both sides, I call up amendment No. 3004, the Snowe-Wyden amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oregon [Mr. WYDEN], for Ms. SNOWE, for herself and Mr. WYDEN, proposes an amendment numbered 3004.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To ensure that any savings associated with legislation that authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to use the collective purchasing power of 40,000,000 Medicare beneficiaries to negotiate the best possible prices for prescription drugs provided through part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act in fallback plans, by private drug plans (if asked) and in other circumstances, but not permitting a uniform formulary or price setting, is reserved for deficit reduction or to improve the Medicare drug benefit)

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. _____. **RESERVE FUND FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF THE BEST POSSIBLE PRICE FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS THROUGH MEDICARE PART D.**

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the aggregates, allocations, functional totals, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution upon enactment of legislation that allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to use the collective purchasing power of 40,000,000 Medicare beneficiaries to negotiate the best possible prices for prescription drugs provided through part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act in fallback plans and, if asked, by private drug plans, and in other circumstances, but not permitting price setting or a uniform formulary, by the amount of savings in that legislation, to ensure that those savings are reserved for deficit reduction or to improve the Medicare part D drug benefit.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, we all have seen the frustrations and the heartache that senior citizens have experienced over these last few months as the prescription drug legislation has gone into effect. Certainly, some folks are being helped, and we are glad to see it. But in order to really make a prescription drug benefit work, we have to contain the costs of medicine. That is

what Senator SNOWE and I are trying to do. We are trying to do it by using marketplace forces, not Government but marketplace forces to hold down the cost of medicine.

A majority of the Senate is now on record as favoring this proposal. A majority of the Senate voted for it last fall before all the headaches and the frustrations that seniors have experienced. So in my view, the case is a lot stronger today than it even was last fall when a majority of the Senate voted for it.

I think that is the reason the American Association of Retired Persons has written to the Senate saying they are in support of the bipartisan Snowe-Wyden legislation. They have something they call their Rx Watchdog group. It is an effort by AARP—a very laudable effort—to monitor the cost of medicine. They report that the cost of medicine is going up twice the rate of inflation.

Of course, we know older people use more medicines than the rest of the population. It would be one thing if people were trying to go about doing this in an arbitrary kind of fashion, using a one-size-fits-all Government approach or price controls. That is not what the bipartisan Snowe-Wyden legislation does.

We want to be very clear, as we offer this legislation, that at line 13 and line 14 of this amendment, there is a statutory prohibition on price controls as an effort to hold down the cost of medicine.

Let me repeat that to the Senate. The bipartisan Snowe-Wyden legislation at line 13 and line 14 includes a bipartisan statutory ban on price setting as an effort to control the cost of medicine. This is about using marketplace forces to hold down the cost of these drugs that are clobbering our older people.

I don't see how anyone can oppose this amendment and, in fact, Secretary Tommy Thompson, the former Secretary of Health and Human Services, said in his last press conference that he just wished he had this authority. He wished he had the kind of authority that is in this amendment. It doesn't mean it is going to be used all the time, but it means it is a tool, an opportunity like we have every single day in the private sector of our economy to hold down the cost of medicine.

The way Medicare is going to go out and buy these prescription drugs reminds me of somebody going to COSTCO and buying one role of toilet paper at a time. Nobody would go shopping that way. Everybody who is in a position to do so exercises their marketplace clout, the opportunity to be a savvy shopper, the opportunity to say I am going to purchase a lot of something. I want to get my money's worth.

I just hope the Senate this time, when we have seen all the frustrations older people are having, uses this chance to do something about it.

We know lots of lobbyists are against this amendment. Last week we had a

discussion on lobbying reform. I can tell colleagues in the Senate that probably the biggest trophy on a lobbyist's wall is to defeat the bipartisan Snowe-Wyden amendment, but that doesn't make it right. What we need to do is what is right for older people and at a time when millions of seniors are walking on an economic tightrope, balancing their food costs against their fuel costs, and their fuel costs against their medical bills, this is a chance to use marketplace forces to hold down the cost of medicine.

For older people, there are no costs going up like prescription drugs. Some are saying: We can get these cost savings without the Snowe-Wyden amendment. A lot of those people are the same ones who said that the rollout of the prescription drug program would go perfectly. We say that certainly has not been the case.

Now there is a chance to go home at this break and say you actually moved to do something important that older people are talking about at their kitchen table every single day, and that is the cost of medicine.

I don't know of any special interest group in this country that got the kind of sweetheart arrangement in this legislation that the pharmaceutical sector has. There is no other group in this country, no other group that got a specific carve-out so we couldn't use marketplace forces to hold down the cost of medicine. It is really staggering that one group was singled out to be immune from the forces of the marketplace.

Secretary Thompson thought it made no sense. It certainly makes no sense right now when older people are being clobbered by the cost of medicine and finding it hard to secure the benefits of this program. In fact, my sense is one of the reasons a lot of older people have been reluctant to sign up is they can't see any cost savings in the program.

Here is a chance to generate some real cost savings. That is why AARP indicated its support for the amendment. That is why Secretary Thompson said he wished he had the authority. That is why every timber company, steel company, and auto company in the country uses its marketplace clout to hold down the cost of medicine. Fifty-one Senators voted for it last fall before we saw all the older people have the problems they have had over the last couple of months.

I hope colleagues, on a bipartisan basis, will support this amendment. Senator SNOWE and I have worked on this now for 3 years. We said we were going to work on it at the time the original legislation was voted on. AARP, like Senator SNOWE, like myself, like Chairman GRASSLEY, for whom I have enormous respect—we are all in support of the original legislation. I still have the welts on my back to show for my support for the legislation. But as AARP says, don't miss the opportunity to improve on this legislation which we can do by using marketplace forces.

I urge colleagues, particularly in light of some of what has been written, to take a look at line 13 and line 14 of the amendment which specifically prohibits the use of price controls under this amendment as a tool to hold down the cost of medicine.

Madam President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired. The Senator from Iowa.

MR. GRASSLEY. Madam President, here we are again. Today's discussion, as the famous words go, is déjà vu all over again.

First of all, we heard the words "sweetheart deal" for drug companies. If drug companies had their way, they would want no formularies, which is what the Wyden amendment would require. These drug companies would want all drugs covered regardless of cost. So don't tell me this is a sweetheart deal. If we didn't have formularies like we would have if the Wyden amendment is adopted, then all drugs would be covered regardless of cost. Then they would not have to compete. But this legislation requires competition building upon the practices that we have used for the Federal employee health plan for 40 years. We patterned this legislation after that because that is what saves money.

I am beginning to lose count of the number of times that this issue has come before us. So I have to keep repeating—but it doesn't seem to sink in—that the Medicare Modernization Act does not prohibit negotiations with drug companies. Nothing could be further from the truth. But hearing the last speech, one couldn't come to that conclusion. In fact, the law requires Medicare plans to negotiate with drugmakers for better prices. These negotiations are at the heart of the Medicare drug program.

It is an absurd claim that the Government will not be negotiating with drugmakers comes from the noninterference clause in the Medicare law. The noninterference clause does not prohibit Medicare from negotiating with drugmakers. What it does is it prohibits the Center for Medicare Services from interfering with these negotiations.

To be clear, the noninterference clause is at the heart of the bill's structure for delivering prescription drug coverage. This clause ensures those savings will result from market competition rather than through Government price fixing. The average beneficiary premium is \$25. That is \$12 less than the \$37 that was estimated less than 12 months ago, going back to July of last year. That clearly demonstrates that the law's structure is accomplishing that objective and then some; otherwise, we would have \$37-a-month premiums or more instead of the average \$25 premiums that we have.

This year's cost to the Government then is \$8 billion less than what we thought it would be last July. The 10-

year cost has dropped by \$180 billion, as we tried to estimate ahead what programs might cost 10 years into the future.

The Center for Medicare Services and the Consumers Union have reported that beneficiaries are getting substantial savings under this drug benefit. These plain and simple facts ought to take the wind out of the sails of the argument that private companies can't deliver an affordable benefit for our beneficiaries and even for the taxpayers. These plans can deliver, and they are delivering. That is competition, not something that they set out to do. That is the market forces bringing down prices.

Some might say: Well, if the plans can do that, imagine what the big bureaucracy of the Federal Government can do. To those folks, I urge a word of caution. First, the Government doesn't have such a great track record when it comes to price negotiation. When we considered the Medicare Modernization Act, the Center for Medicare Services' actuary reported that drugs in Part B:

Were reimbursed at rates that, in many instances, were substantially greater than the prevailing price levels.

Even The Washington Post editorial of February 17, 2004, said:

Governments are notoriously bad at setting prices, and the U.S. Government is notoriously bad at setting prices in the medical realm.

My second point is beneficiaries don't have one-size-fits-all prescription drug needs. They need choices. Forty-four million different Americans have 44 million different solutions—or you can't have one plan fits all, I guess is what I should say. The companies offering the drug benefit must offer coverage for a wide array of brand and generic drugs. The companies also are offering plans with lower or even no deductible. Many are offering additional coverage so that there is no doughnut hole.

The bottom line is the approach taken in the Medicare Modernization Act has resulted in affordable choices for beneficiaries while saving the taxpayers money.

When we crafted this act, the Congressional Budget Office concluded that the market-based approach would result in better prescription drug cost management for Medicare than any other approach that was being considered at that time by the Congress. Here is what the Congressional Budget Office said about eliminating the noninterference clause in a letter last year:

The Secretary would not be able to negotiate prices that further reduce Federal spending to a significant degree.

The Congressional Budget Office went on to say:

CBO estimates that substantial savings will be obtained by the private plans.

That estimate is now a reality.

We also had an analysis from the chief actuary for the Medicare program.

The chief actuary for the Medicare program, who is required by law to provide independent actuarial analysis on issues facing Medicare, concluded that he does not:

believe that the current Administration or future ones would be willing and able to impose price concessions that significantly exceed those that can be achieved in a competitive market.

In fact, more astonishingly, the chief actuary pointed out that if Medicare establishes drug price levels it will reduce competition not increase it.

The report stated that the establishment of drug price levels for Medicare by the Federal government would eliminate the largest factor that prescription drug plans could otherwise use to compete against each other.

So let's be clear, direct Government negotiation is not the answer. The Government does not negotiate drug prices. The Government sets prices and it does not do a very good job at it.

The law's entire approach is to get beneficiaries the best deal through vigorous market competition, not price controls.

The new Medicare drug benefit creates consumer choices among competing, at-risk private plans.

It is abundantly clear that Medicare plans have leveraged the buying power of millions of beneficiaries to lower drug prices.

I urge my colleagues to oppose efforts to change the law and oppose efforts to get the Government involved in setting drug prices.

It is a prescription for higher costs and fewer choices for beneficiaries.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from North Dakota and then 3 minutes to the Senator from Oregon.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the amendment that has been offered. I was thinking that people listening to this debate must surely think this is a foreign language: noninterference clauses and doughnut holes, and so on and so forth. This is very simple. Let me try and do it in English, if I can.

When Congress passed the prescription drug benefit to provide benefits to senior citizens, a little clause was put in there. My colleague calls it a sweetheart deal. It is even sweeter than that. A clause was put in that says: By the way, the Federal Government cannot negotiate with the drug companies for lower prices. Cannot do it. The Defense Department does it. The VA does it. The evidence is that those negotiations produce about 50 percent of the savings that is reducing the drug prices by 50 percent, but the Medicare prescription drug plan cannot have that happen. The Government cannot negotiate for lower prices.

My colleague describes this as a noninterference clause. About the time you think you get a handle on something here and have an aggressive de-

bate, they change the titles and change the subject. This is not about noninterference. There is no noninterference involved. The question is, Should the Federal Government be able to negotiate for lower prescription drug prices in this plan, as we do in the VA and as we do in the Defense Department? The answer is yes.

My colleague talks about 10-year savings, 10 years out. Look, economists who can't remember their home phone numbers are telling us what they think is going to happen in 10 years. I know what is going to happen. We are going to break the back of this Government financially if we don't negotiate lower prices. This is similar to hooking a hose up to the tank and sucking the tank dry. Let the pharmaceutical companies decide to tell us what they are going to charge us and, by the way, we can't negotiate better prices as we do in the VA system for veterans. That doesn't make any sense to me.

The toughest job in the Senate is to come to the floor and justify or defend a proposal that we can't negotiate for lower prices. The second toughest job is for those who vote against this amendment to go home and explain to their constituents how they defied common sense.

It makes common sense for us to say: Let's get the best price we can from these pharmaceutical companies. How do you do that? You do that by the power of the purse, having the Federal Government negotiate for lower prices. We have done it in the VA, we have done it in the Defense Department. We saved 50 percent of the cost by doing it. My colleague is dead right. Yes, this is a sweetheart deal. This is not about noninterference; it is about whether we can negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry for lower prices. The answer ought to be, of course, we ought to do that. We ought to do it aggressively in order to save the taxpayers money; otherwise, we are going to break the bank. I thought fiscal conservatism was about trying to save the taxpayers money.

This amendment will do more to save the taxpayers money in the next 10 years than almost anything else we can do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, Senator SNOWE will close this afternoon for our bipartisan amendment, but I want to highlight a couple of points. There is a reason that AARP strongly supports the Snowe-Wyden amendment. There is a reason that Secretary Thompson, before he left the Health and Human Services Department, said he wanted this authority, and that is this is just plain common sense.

Everybody else in the marketplace who is in a position to use their clout does it but not Medicare.

I want to set the record straight on a couple of comments that were made by my friend, the chairman of the Finance

Committee. Again, at lines 13 and 14 of the bipartisan Snowe-Wyden amendment, in addition to the prohibition against price controls, there is a prohibition against a uniform formulary. So we are using all of the same forces in the marketplace of the private sector under this amendment that go on all across the land today. There are no price controls. There is no uniform formulary. For colleagues who want to see the language, it is at line 13 and line 14 of the Snowe-Wyden amendment.

Let us have some practical, smart shopping with respect to this program, where the costs are going into the stratosphere. I don't know of anybody in the United States who would shop the way Medicare is shopping today for prescription drugs. It would be one thing if it was working.

AARP supports this amendment because the cost of medicine is rising twice the rate of inflation. So if you want to say to the seniors when you go home next week that you took some practical steps to control the costs of medicine, you will support the Snowe-Wyden amendment. If you think everything is working fine right now—and we don't—then I guess you oppose us. But I hope colleagues will, as they did last November, a majority of them, support us because now they can make a difference. They can make a difference for older people. They can make a difference for taxpayers. I hope my colleagues, when Senator SNOWE wraps up for our side this afternoon, will support this bipartisan amendment because it is just plain shopping smart at a crucial time when older people need that approach to hold down the cost of health care.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, the Snowe-Wyden amendment purports to create a reserve fund within the budget that could be used to allow the Federal Government to improve its negotiating position with respect to lowering the price of prescription drugs. I will vote in favor of this amendment because much more needs to be done to insure that Americans will not be forced to give up their medications because of rising prices.

However, I know that a number of veterans in West Virginia are concerned about what a Governmentwide prescription drug negotiation program would mean to the prices of medicines dispensed through hospitals in the Department of Veterans Affairs. There are concerns that veterans would lose access to the medications they need at advantageous prices.

It is important for West Virginians to understand that the Snowe-Wyden amendment does not have the force of law, and, even if it should be adopted today, the amendment would have no impact on the VA's ability to negotiate favorable drug prices for our veterans. Additional legislation would have to be passed by Congress and signed into law before any changes to the VA's pre-

scription drug negotiating power could be made. I will continue to keep the concerns of West Virginia's veterans in mind should the Senate take up a debate on legislation that relates to the price of prescription drugs.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, today I rise to speak on the amendment offered by Senator SNOWE to S. Con. Res. 83. This amendment addresses the question of whether the Federal Government should play a role in negotiating the prices of Medicare prescription drug plans. In the past, I have supported similar measures that would allow the Federal Government to negotiate prescription drug plan prices, based on the idea that there was a need to contain rising prescription drug costs and that negotiation would have the effect of driving down costs.

However, we are now seeing dramatically lower costs than we had anticipated. Specifically, CMS recently announced that the average premium of a Medicare prescription drug plan is \$25; this is thirty two-percent reduction from the premium estimates of 1 year ago. Also, CMS has reported almost doubling of discounts and rebates of drugs under the Medicare prescription drug program from original projections. These effects are a result of the fact that under the Medicare prescription drug program, similar to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, numerous plans are in competition to offer consumers the lowest possible prices.

In view of this, today, I am voting not to support this amendment, and instead, am lending my support to offering America's seniors the lowest and most affordable prices on their prescription drugs. We now have evidence that the lowest prices are offered through what makes this nation's economy one of the most robust in the world—healthy competition.

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, I yield off of our time 2 minutes to the Senator from Iowa to respond.

Before I do that, however, I understand that there is an order in place that the next amendment will be the Conrad amendment, followed by the Byrd amendment. We would like to ask unanimous consent to reverse that order, so that following the Snowe-Wyden amendment, we would move to the Byrd amendment next, rather than the Conrad amendment. So I ask unanimous consent for that change in the order of the amendment process.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, two speakers ago, the Senate heard the Senator from North Dakota say that the drug bill says that the Secretary cannot negotiate. It doesn't say that anywhere in the law. It doesn't say it anywhere. They made that up. I don't know what sort of political points they want to make, but keeping the speeches to what the law says, and not what somebody thinks it says, seems to be very important to intellectually honest debate.

To the Senator from Oregon, drug companies want cash-paying customers with no coverage because those people, as we all know, pay the highest prices. The drug companies don't have to negotiate with anyone when seniors don't have any drug coverage, such as they didn't have before this law went into effect. Part D provides that drug coverage, and now the drug companies have to compete to offer lower prices and to get plans to put their drugs on their preferred drug list. It is very necessary. They would like to have the environment that you want: No formulary. Then they have everything the way they want it. That is how negotiations work, to drive down prices, to get your plan approved, and that is how competition works to reduce prices, and that is what we see after 2½ months of the operation of this legislation. Don't give the drug companies what they want: no formulary.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, at this point, the Byrd amendment is in order; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I want to thank Senator BYRD for graciously coming to the floor as we sought to accommodate other Senators so they could make quorums in other committees. It was very gracious of him to come on short notice so that this time would not be lost.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

AMENDMENT NO. 3086

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, I thank my distinguished colleague for his kind remarks. At this time, I offer an amendment cosponsored by myself and Senators LAUTENBERG, CLINTON, DORGAN, LIEBERMAN, KERRY, BIDEN, DURBIN, MENENDEZ, and JEFFORDS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from West Virginia [Mr. BYRD], for himself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. JEFFORDS, proposes an amendment numbered 3086.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To preserve a national intercity passenger rail system by providing adequate funding of \$1.45 billion for Amtrak in Fiscal Year 2007 and to fully offset this additional funding by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, this amendment adds \$550 million to the fiscal year 2007 budget for Amtrak. All aboard for Amtrak, Amtrak.

The Bush administration's budget for the coming year assumes that Amtrak will be handed a funding cut of almost \$400 million—a whopping cut of more than 30 percent. As in past years, there is absolutely no inherent logic underlying this budget request. Every observer who has testified before the Congress regarding Amtrak's financial needs has concluded that dramatic cuts—dramatic cuts—of this kind would result in Amtrak being thrown into bankruptcy, endangering rail service in every region of the Nation, including the Northeast corridor.

Amtrak is not just a high-speed train service for the residents of Boston, MA, New York City, and Washington, DC. Amtrak is also a network that links cities such as Portland, ME, and Wells, ME, with that Northeast corridor. It also links communities such as Prince, in Raleigh County, WV, with cities such as Cincinnati, OH. It connects White Fish, MT, with St. Cloud, MN. It connects rural America with the central transportation and economic networks of our country.

This amendment would restore Amtrak's funding to the level of \$1.45 billion. This funding level stands some \$150 million higher than the current funding level. However, it also is \$150 million below the level that has been requested by Amtrak's board of directors. I should point out that every member of Amtrak's board of directors was appointed by President George Bush and this slate of Bush appointees is telling us they need \$1.6 billion to invest adequately in the railroad, guarantee quality service, and restore this increasingly aging infrastructure of the Amtrak system.

This amendment would provide \$1.45 billion. That is the precise funding level that 97 Senators across the political spectrum, Republican and Democrat alike, voted for when we passed the Transportation-Treasury Appropriations bill less than 5 months ago. I hope today, with the passage of this amendment, we can make the same affirmative bipartisan statement to our States and communities that their Amtrak service will be secure for yet another year.

Amtrak recently reported that it had achieved a record year for ridership for the third year in a row. The number of citizens using the Amtrak network grew to 24.5 million last year. Amtrak is growing in popularity in all regions of the country. For example, on Amtrak's Empire Builder—which serves Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington—ridership has grown by more than 14 percent over the last year. The Downeaster service in Maine grew by 10 percent, while the Heartland Flier service between Oklahoma City and Ft. Worth, TX, grew by a healthy 23 percent.

For those of my colleagues who like to complain that Amtrak is a bloated, excessively costly railroad, I point out that just as Amtrak has achieved record ridership in each of the last 3 years, so has it reduced its employment levels over each of these years. Between 2001 and 2005, Amtrak has reduced its workforce by over 22 percent.

If the Senate adopts this amendment this afternoon, we can make an affirmative statement to these millions of Amtrak riders across the entire country that we will not allow them to be left standing at the platform next year because of the White House's budgetary shenanigans.

I understand the junior Senator from Pennsylvania is expected to offer an amendment concerning Amtrak. The amendment by the Senator from Pennsylvania would do nothing to help Amtrak or the millions of riders who rely on Amtrak. The amendment purports to help Amtrak but it does no such thing. The amendment does not increase the allocation to the Appropriations Committee. Instead, the amendment pretends to pay for increased Amtrak funding by cutting something called function 920 allowances. When it comes to the real work of passing appropriations bills, the Senate has to cut real programs. We cannot cut something called "allowances." This amendment is a magic asterisk. It is not fiscal discipline.

My amendment is paid for by eliminating loopholes in the Tax Code, loophole closures that have been voted on by a majority in this body on several occasions. In reality, what the distinguished Senator from Pennsylvania would be asking the Senate to do is pass an amendment that will force cuts in critical programs. What programs would the Senator have us cut? Funds for the troops? Funds for medical care for our veterans? Funds for educating our children? Would the Senator have the Senate cut border or port security? Would he have the Senate cut grants for Low Income Home Energy Assistance?

The budget resolution that is before the Senate provides discretionary funding that is so limited for domestic programs that cuts in such critical programs are just not likely, they are inevitable. The amendment by the Senator from Pennsylvania would precipitate even deeper cuts.

I urge Senators to vote for this amendment, the Byrd amendment, co-sponsored by myself and the other Senators listed. I send the list to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Who yields time? The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. I yield the time we have in opposition on this amendment to the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I don't think I am going to use more time than has been allotted on this amendment, but just in case, I hope the manager would give me a minute or two off the bill.

Madam President, I wish to speak through the Chair to the Senator from West Virginia. I am going to speak not specifically against your amendment, but you have identified closing corporate tax loopholes as one way of raising revenue to offset yours. I am going to take advantage of my time against your amendment to speak because Members on your side of the aisle have used this approach in the past, and I want to say how there are some problems doing that.

Virtually all Democratic Members had a common theme in their amendments—raising taxes for more spending. The purported offset for each of these amendments—several yesterday and more today—would close tax loopholes to pay for whatever popular spending program is proposed. The Senate tax relief reconciliation bill that is now in conference between the House and Senate—and that is a reconciliation bill left over from last year's budget resolution, some of the unfinished business of last year that we have to get worked out this spring—this conference's bills already include \$20 to \$30 billion of loophole closers. Ironically, many of the proponents of these amendments that have been offered on the other side of the aisle, using tax loophole closers, were among the small minority of Members who opposed the tax relief reconciliation bill that contained offsets. In some cases, the proponents have acknowledged that the Finance Committee, which I chair, has already used these loophole closers. The Finance Committee will be responsible, then, if these amendments are adopted, for creating new loophole closers.

That is not a problem. I don't consider that a problem because I am looking to close abusive uses of the Tax Code. My Finance Committee staff has proven itself quite effective in the past in identifying offsets. Just in the period of time since 2001, our committee has raised around \$200 billion in new revenues by shutting down tax shelters, by closing inversions, and other abusive tax schemes.

In the year 2004 alone, the Finance Committee fully offset a \$137 billion tax bill at no expense to the American taxpayers. This was what was known at that time as the FSC-ETI repeal bill. So I think the Finance Committee, since 2001—or using the year 2004 alone—has a pretty good handle on what is possible in the "raisers" category. So, implied, do the Democrats who are proposing closing tax loopholes know it is not necessarily an easy job, a job we have been working on, a job we have been successful at, but the more of this you do, the less there is to take care of what they are trying to bring us to do, closing tax loopholes?

I might imply that maybe they are taking the easy way out because of using the term "loophole closers." That may not be such an easy way out for those of us who have to do it.

This brings me then to the amendments that have been proposed. The sponsors say they have offset the costs of the amendments by closing tax loopholes. I wish to know what loopholes they have in mind. If we use the inventory of Senate-acceptable offsets, we can raise about \$11 billion over 5 years. But that \$11 billion, even if we accomplish it, is a far cry from the cumulative demands of the amendments that have already been offered from the other side and probably will be offered yet today and tomorrow. We are probably going to have to find more revenue raisers just to cover the items that Members say they support in the tax relief agenda that is out there that everybody wants me to get passed.

The Finance Committee staff hopes to use the full \$30 billion that is already in conference in the Senate tax relief reconciliation bill. Some have referred to the recent "tax gap" report of the Joint Committee. But this is also going to be a heavy lift. When Members try to use some unidentified loophole closers—and these have all been unidentified—to pay for their amendments, what they are saying is that we should use something out of the \$30 billion that has been set by the Finance Committee staff that we are considering in conference committee right now. So, in fact, the proponents' amendment is going to displace something covered by the resolution. That point has to be made crystal clear, because this is the crux of the problem. If you use a loophole closer that is already called for in the tax relief package that is in conference, it means that something in the tax cut package will have to be taken out.

What do my colleagues, who are using loophole closers, suggest that we take out that most of them think ought to be law because they voted for it in the first place? The tax relief reconciliation bill covers a number of items that Members on the other side do support. For example, it covers, through the year 2010, provisions that they support such as tuition deduction, such as low-income savers credit, small business expensing. These are sunsetted. They have to be reenacted to keep existing tax policy. You have to have offsets for them.

Also covered are 1-year provisions that they say they support, such as business extenders like research and development. Several States have sales taxes that will not be deductible anymore if we don't pass this bill. The alternative minimum tax hold harmless—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Could I have 1 more minute?

Mr. CRAPO. I yield the Senator 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. There is the alternative minimum tax hold harmless, so that 22 million more Americans do not

get hit by the alternative minimum income tax. Middle-income people who were never intended to pay it will if we don't get this bill out of conference with these offsets in it. Everybody on the other side of the aisle doesn't want an alternative minimum tax to hit middle-income people, so they are going to take those revenue raisers, those tax loophole closers that we are using for this to use for something such as Amtrak, now before us, as an example.

There are other provisions.

The reconciliation number covers these items. Yet this amendment would tear away the revenue offsets needed to pay for these items.

You can't say you are for these items and not provide room for the tax cut that is in the reconciliation bill in conference. You can't use the offsets for something else without providing for those items. You can't have it both ways, in other words.

What is the loophole closer you would use, I ask them. There are none of them identified. Will it be taken from the \$30 billion reconciliation already accounted for in that bill or is there a new issue we haven't seen? If you have a secret revenue loophole closer out there, I want to know about it. A loophole closer actually has to raise money. Members need to know that some of the leftover items from last year may not raise any money in the current year when they want to spend it. You can't rely on raisers that were done in the past.

We also need to remember that many of these leftover offsets were rejected by the House.

It is not enough to call for "more loophole closers." The amendment's sponsor needs to tell us where the money is coming from; otherwise the call for offsets is just a call for "funny money," in a sense.

Members need to know that the till is empty. A fictitious offset will not suffice. We have a lot of heavy lifting to do under this resolution as written. If you want to add more weight to the problem, you need to tell us where the money is going to come from.

I ask you to vote against these amendments because they are not identifying loophole closers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Madam President, I rise to talk about the Amtrak issue. This is a very important issue to me, to my State, to Philadelphia, and the 30th Street station. It is the second busiest train station nationally, with over 3.7 million boarding a year. Amtrak and the health of Amtrak is important. In addition, we have about 3,000 employees based in Pennsylvania who are employed by Amtrak. It not only makes a difference for us from the standpoint of our communities in southeastern Pennsylvania but the employment picture as well.

The continued health of Amtrak is important. That is why over the years

you have supported efforts on the floor of the Senate to increase funding for Amtrak. I voted for appropriations bills as well as budget proposals.

I rise in opposition to the Byrd amendment. The chairman of the Finance Committee articulated it well—that in essence what Senator BYRD wants to do is increase taxes to pay for this amendment. I cannot support hurting the economy of this country by supporting something that is important from an appropriations standpoint. I think we need to set priorities in appropriations. We have done that in the past.

Amtrak has fared very well here in the Senate, and we have had support in the House to be able to get funding for this program. In fact, over the years we have increased funding. Last year the Senate version had \$1.45 billion, which is obviously more than the \$900 million in the current budget proposal. I will be offering an amendment to increase that funding from the \$900 million which is in the bill right now to the \$1.45 billion level and adding \$550 million. I will do so through the section 920 account. I anticipate my colleague from North Dakota coming up and saying again that there is no money in the 920 account. He is correct; there is not money there, but there will be a very strong message sent by passing this amendment, if it is successful, to the appropriators of the importance of this program.

Again, I think we have seen that without raising the cap or without raising taxes, the Senate has been able to come up with a robust number for Amtrak which I will support within the context of a responsible budget. We have done it year after year, and we will continue to do that.

AMENDMENT NO. 3015

I call up my amendment No. 3015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. SANTORUM], for himself and Mr. SPECTER, proposes an amendment numbered 3015.

Mr. SANTORUM. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide an additional \$550,000,000 for Amtrak for fiscal year 2007)

On page 16, line 21, strike "\$78,268,000,000" and insert "\$78,818,000,000".

On page 16, line 22, strike "\$75,774,000,000" and insert "\$76,324,000,000".

On page 27, line 23, strike "\$-500,000,000" and insert "\$-1,050,000,000".

On page 27, line 24, strike "\$-500,000,000" and insert "\$-1,050,000,000".

Mr. SANTORUM. Madam President, Senator SPECTER is an original cosponsor of this amendment. Obviously there is no greater supporter of Amtrak out there than Senator SPECTER. We hope this amendment will be passed and the Byrd amendment will be defeated. But understand that the commitment of

Senator SPECTER and my commitment is that we will work through the appropriations process to make sure Amtrak is adequately funded in the appropriations process.

I think I have said all I need to say on the Amtrak issue.

I ask unanimous consent to add Senator VITTER and Senator TALENT as cosponsors to my amendment No. 3050, which is increasing funding for the CDBG Program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, the Senator from Pennsylvania correctly anticipated my concern about his amendment, not the additional funding for Amtrak. I completely agree with the Senator from Pennsylvania, and I agree with the Senator from West Virginia on the desirability of providing that additional \$550 million.

There are two very different ways to do it. One is the approach of Senator BYRD, which is to close additional tax loopholes. I commend the Finance Committee. They have done an exceptionally good job over the last several years of working to shut down some of these very abusive tax loopholes. I salute the chairman of the Finance Committee for his interest in doing that. I salute his very professional staff for the work in that regard. We all know there is more to be done. I have offered just two that would easily cover this expenditure—in fact, cover it many times over.

One is what is going on in the Cayman Islands with this incredible scam of companies saying they are doing business there when they are not. They are doing business there, or claiming they are doing business, in order to escape income taxes in this country. Why are they in the Cayman Islands? Because the Cayman Islands is a well-known tax haven. There are 12,700 companies headquartered in a five-story little office building in the Cayman Islands. That is a scam. It ought to be shut down. It would save tens of billions of dollars if it were. That is what Senator BYRD says should be done to finance this additional money for Amtrak.

The Senator from Pennsylvania says take money out of function 920. The problem with that is there is no money in function 920. I refer my colleagues to page 29 of the concurrent resolution on the budget. If you go to page 29, what you see going down to function 920—it is called allowance—there is no money there. In fact, it is \$500 million under water before we ever started. We have had a whole series of amendments offered on the other side today to take money out of that account to pay for things. There is no money.

If we want to talk about “funny money” financing, as the chairman of the Finance Committee did, that is it. That is it—taking money from an account that has no money. That is the whole problem with this budget. This whole budget takes money we don’t

have. The result is we keep running up the debt.

I am told that Senator LAUTENBERG is on his way to the Chamber to address this issue. I inquire how much time is left on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The opposition has 4 minutes; the proponents have 3½ minutes.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise in strong support of the Byrd-Laurenberg amendment to provide additional funding for Amtrak, and I do so to protect the 25 million people who ride Amtrak each year, as well as the one hundred thousand New Jersey commuters who depend on Amtrak’s infrastructure every day.

The current level of funding in this budget for Amtrak does not recognize the tremendous benefits generated by intercity rail in this country. Not the billions of dollars generated in commerce, nor the thousands of businesses along the Northeast Corridor whose employees are dependent on Amtrak, nor the national security value of having an additional mode of transportation, nor the benefits to our environment by taking cars off the road.

Every year, we hear complaints that Amtrak has already received too much money from the Federal Government, but the fact is that we have spent less money on Amtrak in the last 35 years than we will on highways in this year alone. And highways don’t pay for themselves, even with the gas tax. Neither does mass transit, either in this country or anywhere else in the world. But we subsidize them because they improve the quality of our lives. And that is what transportation is about. It is not just getting from one place to another. It is about creating jobs, revitalizing neighborhoods, stimulating commerce, redeveloping underutilized land, and making us more secure.

We have never provided the kind of commitment to Amtrak that we have for other modes of transportation, and this amendment will be an important step to getting Amtrak off the starvation budgets that it has subsisted on for far too long. A vote for the Byrd-Laurenberg amendment is a vote for a strong Amtrak, and a stable national network of intercity rail, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Another issue that I would like to bring up regarding the Amtrak budget is the misconception that New Jersey and other States along the Northeast Corridor are not paying their fair share. I believe that misconception may have led to the insertion of a provision in the fiscal year 2006 transportation appropriations bill that directed the Department of Transportation to assess additional fees to commuter railroads on the Northeast Corridor.

New Jersey currently pays over \$100 million a year to Amtrak, and has invested roughly \$1.8 billion in the Northeast Corridor since 1991. New Jersey Transit also maintains and operates the stations along the corridor in New Jersey, all at no cost to Amtrak.

It pays no operating subsidy because the Northeast Corridor turns an operating profit. But this new provision in the appropriations bill could cost New Jersey tens of millions of additional dollars, a cost which would eventually be borne by New Jersey commuters.

As we continue this debate throughout the year, I hope that my colleagues will recognize the investment that New Jersey already makes for intercity passenger rail, and I look forward to working with them to come to a resolution that ensures equitability for all States.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, we have votes scheduled to start at 1 o’clock. Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, maybe the Senator from Idaho wishes to take some of the remaining time, and perhaps we would have a chance to hear Senator LAUTENBERG before we vote.

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, I wish to take a couple of moments to do a little housekeeping business and then we can be set up for the vote while we wait on Senator LAUTENBERG.

First, I ask unanimous consent on behalf of Senator GREGG, Senator CONRAD, and Senator BYRD to withdraw the Byrd amendment No. 3062, reserving the right of the Senator from West Virginia or his designee to offer an amendment in relation to amendment No. 3062 prior to final action on this resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, secondly, I ask unanimous consent that at 3 o’clock today the Senate proceed to the votes in relation to the following amendments: Senator STABENOW, amendment No. 3056; Senator MCCONNELL, No. 3061; Senator MENENDEZ, No. 3054; Senator CHAMBLISS, No. 3018; Senator GRASSLEY, No. 3073; Senator NELSON, No. 3009; the Snowe-Wyden amendment, No. 3004; the Byrd amendment, No. 3086; and Senator SANTORUM, No. 3015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I have slightly different numbers on two of the amendments. Maybe we could get that straightened out. I have Chambliss No. 3018.

Mr. CRAPO. That is the number I have.

Mr. CONRAD. Grassley is 3073?

Mr. CRAPO. Yes.

Mr. CONRAD. Perhaps I heard that incorrectly.

There is no objection on this side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, the Senator from New Jersey is here.

How much time do we have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 3 minutes 15 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. I yield that time to the very able Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, I rise to talk about an amendment Senator BYRD and I are offering to adequately fund Amtrak. I understand there is an alternative that has been offered by the Senator from Pennsylvania which, very frankly, I think amounts to an empty gesture. It is an amendment that looks as though it has funding for the continuation of Amtrak's operations but in fact it doesn't because it doesn't have a source of funding that has any reliability to it.

The bottom line is if we want to fund Amtrak, if we want to keep it going, a vote has to be made for the Byrd-Lautenberg amendment.

President Bush proposed to initially bankrupt Amtrak in last year's budget. The American people and the Democrats and Republicans in Congress stood up and said no. So this year, instead of trying to kill Amtrak outright, President Bush wants to put it on a starvation diet.

This is no time for us to be looking at trying to kill Amtrak because Amtrak in many cases is our only alternative to the crowded skies, to the crowded highways, to be able to move people in the event of emergencies, and as a way to get to work and take care of people's needs. Amtrak and transit in general offers one of the few options.

When we look back at what happened on 9/11, the only transit transportation facility that was available on that terrible day was Amtrak. We never thought it could happen, but we shut down aviation completely. Here we are, and some of our friends on the other side of the aisle think that eliminating Amtrak might be a good idea.

What was proposed by our colleague from Pennsylvania, the junior Senator, was that we find a funding source somewhere in magic land. The money is not there. It is something called 920, which is to hide behind the facts and not tell the truth. But when I look at what is happening in the State of Pennsylvania in terms of Amtrak, I frankly cannot figure out what the mission is here. Pennsylvania has over 4.9 million riders a year on Amtrak.

It is not just Philadelphia and New York; it is not just Philadelphia and Washington; it is places such as Harrisburg and other communities within the State of Pennsylvania that require service. Instead, what they are getting here today is a sleight of hand, saying, Well, we want to put more money in Amtrak, more money than has been proposed in the budget by some \$500 million. The fact is there is no money there. There is a colloquialism that has developed in America which says "show me the money." There is no "show" and there is no "dough." That is where we are.

Our amendment accounts for the funding necessary by taking it from corporate loopholes and tax shelters.

I hope people here will understand how valuable Amtrak is to our coun-

try, how necessary it is, and vote for the Byrd-Lautenberg amendment and not the alternative that has been proposed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3063

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THUNE). There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided on the Murray amendment.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I ask unanimous consent to add Senator CARPER from Delaware as a cosponsor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, the Senate is about to vote on the Murray amendment which is the only amendment before this Senate that will restore actual dollars to the \$1 billion cut to the Community Development Block Grant Program. We will see another amendment that is paid for by a 920 account that is now \$10.5 billion in the hole—not real money.

When our Committee on Appropriations gets that next fall, all of the Senators will be asking: Why are we cutting CDBG? We did not put real money in to restore that cut, unless we pass the Murray amendment that is paid for by closing tax loopholes.

Real dollars are the difference between this and next fall when our Senators are asking us about CDBG money and why it is being cut. We will relate it directly back to this vote on this amendment.

Let everyone know where the real vote is. If no one believes me, read the Wall Street Journal article, "Republican Budget Plan Advances as Challenges By Democrats Fail," outlining that Republicans in tighter reelection races are offering amendments that are not paid for.

I ask unanimous consent to have this article printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Mar. 15, 2006]

REPUBLICAN BUDGET PLAN ADVANCES AS
CHALLENGES BY DEMOCRATS FAIL

(By David Rogers)

WASHINGTON—A Republican budget plan advanced in the Senate, after Democrats narrowly failed to lift proposed spending caps and impose tighter antideficit rules that would make it harder to extend expiring tax cuts.

Senate Budget Committee Chairman Judd Gregg (R., N.H.) predicted passage of the resolution this week. But a succession of 50-50 roll-call votes underscored the fragile support for the plan, which projects higher deficits than the White House's budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

Adding to the tension is that senators must temporarily set aside the resolution today to address a companion bill that would raise the nation's debt ceiling by \$781 billion. The new \$8.965 trillion ceiling represents an estimated 50% increase since Mr. Bush took office, and Sen. Kent Conrad (D., N.D.) complained that the nation's debt is rising like a "scalded cat."

Meanwhile, top House Republicans reached agreement last evening on a set of lobbying

and ethics-rules changes in response to recent scandals. Elements include a moratorium on privately funded trips for the remainder of this Congress, a ban on lobbyists accompanying lawmakers on corporate aircraft, and improved audits of disclosure reports filed by lobbyists.

"I think we have a good package here," said House Rules Committee Chairman David Dreier (R., Cal.). Majority Leader John Boehner (R., Ohio) hopes to begin moving major pieces—such as the travel moratorium—through the House early next month.

In the budget debate, Republicans admit they are more cautious this election year in trying to use the budget process to effect change in spending or tax policy. Mr. Gregg has largely abandoned any attempt to use his power to order Senate committees to come up with savings to slow the growth of government benefits like Medicare. And the five-year savings from such programs in his resolution is a fraction of the \$39 billion deficit-reduction bill signed by the president last month.

This leaves the proposed \$872.5 billion cap on discretionary appropriations as a last symbol of fiscal discipline, and Republicans have clung to the provisions for fear of opening the door to unchecked spending.

Mr. Gregg would transfer more money to health and education programs to win support from moderate Republicans. But domestic cuts would be required, and by the chairman's account, his adjustments are largely "illusory."

Republicans in tight re-election races are offering amendments endorsing more spending for causes such as veterans health care and education for the disabled, but these are for show since no money has been added above the cap. For example, \$3 billion was restored for defense by Sen. James Talent (R., Mo.) who said the "highly skilled people" in today's military result in higher personnel costs.

"There's no such thing as a grunt anymore in America's military," Mr. Talent said. The most serious challenge came from Sen. Edward Kennedy (D., Mass.) who proposed to raise the cap by \$6.3 billion to make room for education priorities. But he failed 50-50 for lack of support from Sen. Arlen Specter (R., Pa.), who is pursuing a less-direct challenge to his leadership.

Mr. Specter is proposing that lawmakers get around the \$872.5 billion ceiling by allowing an extra \$7 billion in "advanced appropriations," a category of spending often used to fund education programs ahead of a school year. Mr. Conrad appeared cool to this approach, but if Mr. Specter could win over supporters of Mr. Kennedy's amendment, he could prevail in a roll-call vote today.

* * * crucial to the nation's competitiveness. They are also vital to U.S. defense industries, with many of the most-advanced components and electronics made at newer facilities.

Economists point to growing import competition and an exodus of U.S. production work to low-cost countries as reasons for the birthrate slump. One indication is the ballooning U.S. trade deficit, which hit another record in January.

La-Z-Boy Inc., Monroe, Mich., a maker of recliners and other furniture, felt the imports' bite in 2001, when inexpensive wooden furniture from China began pouring into the U.S. market. In response, the company closed 20 U.S. factories and outsourced most of its own wood-furniture production to China.

To be sure, some manufacturers are adding bricks and mortar. Last year, computer maker Dell Inc. of Round Rock, Texas, opened a \$100 million assembly plant in North Carolina, while Owens-Illinois Inc. of

Toledo, Ohio, poured \$120 million into a Colorado factory that now churns out one billion beer bottles a year.

But most of this growth is concentrated in a relatively narrow array of sectors, such as food, rail equipment and building materials, according to Commerce Department data. The cement industry, for instance, is planning to add 18 new plants at a total cost of \$3.6 billion over the next four years.

One measure of new factory construction—investment in industrial structures—rose last year to \$18.7 billion, up more than 15% from 2004. “But this spending is still just a shadow of what it used to be,” says Tom Runiewicz, an industrial economist at Global Insight, a Lexington, Mass., economic consulting firm. In 1998, this type of investment was about \$43.7 billion, he said. It has become far more common for companies to pour money into upgrading existing plants to make them more productive. This helps explain how, although U.S. industrial production has recovered, the urge to build big new factories remains relatively weak, he says. “Our existing plants are just far more efficient.”

USG Corp., for instance, is rebuilding one plant in Virginia and putting up a new one in Pennsylvania. The Chicago maker of wallboard says the new plants will use machinery that allows them to make wallboard far faster. “What we make is big, heavy, and relatively inexpensive,” says Robert Williams, a USG spokesman, “so usually, you make it close to where you want to sell it.” Indeed, USG has 40 plants scattered around the U.S. and has no plans to reduce its manufacturing footprint.

One factor that gets lost is the size of individual plants. Mr. Meckstroth believes many of the operations that are dying off are smaller companies that have had trouble adapting to the rise of import competition and other competitive forces. “But the bigger companies are surviving, because they have the size and scale,” he says. “They can afford to put in the new lines or move operations overseas themselves if necessary.”

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, this is a classic liberal amendment that increases the size of Government, increases taxes on the American people. A much more appropriate way to do this, if we believe CDBG is important, is vote for the Santorum amendment which makes that a priority but does so within the caps. So it has to compete with other programs that we as a Congress can declare as a priority by using the Santorum amendment.

To follow the Murray proposal is to increase spending by \$1.3 billion and increase taxes by \$1.3 billion; grow the Government, grow the taxpayer. For the American people, that is not the right way to do this.

I yield back my remaining time.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent the yeas and nays be deemed in order for all the amendments that will be called up in this group.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment No. 3063.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted “yea.”

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote “yea.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 43 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Akaka	Feinstein	Mikulski
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Bayh	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Jeffords	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Johnson	Obama
Boxer	Kennedy	Pryor
Byrd	Kerry	Reed
Cantwell	Kohl	Reid
Carper	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Clinton	Lautenberg	Salazar
Conrad	Leahy	Sarbanes
Dodd	Levin	Schumer
Dorgan	Lieberman	Stabenow
Durbin	Lincoln	Voinovich
Feingold	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—53

Alexander	DeWine	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Domenici	Murkowski
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Bond	Enzi	Santorum
Brownback	Frist	Sessions
Bunning	Graham	Shelby
Burns	Grassley	Smith
Burr	Gregg	Snowe
Chafee	Hagel	Specter
Chambliss	Hatch	Stevens
Coburn	Hutchison	Sununu
Cochran	Inhofe	Talent
Collins	Isakson	Thomas
Cornyn	Kyl	Thune
Craig	Lott	Vitter
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman	Dayton
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The amendment (No. 3063) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote and move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE TO ESCORT THE PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the President of Liberia, into the House Chamber for a joint meeting today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 3050

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided on the Santorum amendment.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, the amendment that was just offered by Senator MURRAY was defeated. I hope my colleagues will support this amendment which does not raise the cap but, in fact, expresses a strong sentiment, a strong bipartisan sentiment that the CDBG Program should be funded more robustly. It is at \$1.3 billion. It is offset by the 920 account. But it does express a very important sentiment that this is a high-priority program and that the appropriators should allocate more resources than the President did in his budget recommendation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, it is unfortunate the Senate just defeated the amendment that would actually add real money to CDBG and allow our communities across the Nation to invest in the critical infrastructure to bring hope and opportunity back.

The amendment we are now going to vote on is a sham, and I refuse to be part of a continuing sham that says to all of us that we are going to have CDBG money. Our recipients deserve a lot more. This amendment is for show, as I quote from the Wall Street Journal of today: “. . . for show since no money has been added above the cap”—leaving us, next October, November, in the appropriations bill to either fund CDBG or cut transit and Amtrak, which I know is important to many Senators, and many other critical housing programs.

I urge my colleagues to say no and to put a stop to this continuing sham of amendments that do nothing for our communities that deserve a lot better.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, do I have any time left on my amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted “yea.”

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote “nay.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 60, nays 38, as follows:

(Rollcall Vote No. 44 Leg.)

YEAS—60

Alexander	Dole	Murkowski
Allard	Domenici	Nelson (FL)
Allen	Enzi	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Frist	Pryor
Bond	Graham	Roberts
Brownback	Grassley	Rockefeller
Bunning	Gregg	Santorum
Burns	Hagel	Sessions
Burr	Hatch	Shelby
Byrd	Hutchison	Smith
Chafee	Isakson	Snowe
Chambliss	Johnson	Specter
Clinton	Kyl	Stevens
Cochran	Landrieu	Sununu
Collins	Lieberman	Talent
Cornyn	Lincoln	Thomas
Craig	Lugar	Thune
Crapo	Martinez	Vitter
DeMint	McCain	Voinovich
DeWine	McConnell	Warner

NAYS—38

Akaka	Ensign	Lott
Baucus	Feingold	Menendez
Bayh	Feinstein	Mikulski
Biden	Harkin	Murray
Bingaman	Inhofe	Obama
Boxer	Inouye	Reed
Cantwell	Jeffords	Reid
Carper	Kennedy	Salazar
Coburn	Kerry	Sarbanes
Conrad	Kohl	Schumer
Dodd	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Dorgan	Leahy	Wyden
Durbin	Levin	

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman	Dayton
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The amendment (No. 3050) was agreed to.

JOINT MEETING OF THE TWO HOUSES—ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, in accordance with the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess for the purpose of attending a joint meeting with the House of Representatives to hear the very distinguished President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:50 p.m., took a recess, and the Senate, preceded by its Secretary, Emily J. Reynolds, and its Assistant Sergeant at Arms, Lynne Halbrooks, proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear an address delivered by Her Excellency, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia.

(For the address delivered by the President of Liberia, see today's proceedings in the House of Representatives.)

At 2:59 p.m., the Senate, reassembled and was called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. MARTINEZ).

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 3056

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The next amendment is the Stabenow amendment No. 3056. There is 2 minutes of debate equally divided on the amendment.

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I hope my colleagues will join me in be-

ginning to fix the issue of connecting our radios, radio interoperability. Last December, the 9/11 Commission gave us failing grades in this area, as well as other areas. Back in November of 2003, the White House Office of Management and Budget said there were insufficient funds to do what needs to be done in terms of communications interoperability. They said it would take at least \$16 billion to do this right.

My amendment would provide \$5 billion to jump-start what is happening now. Our esteemed chairman of the Budget Committee has spoken about the fact that there is \$1 billion or \$2 billion available now, but that simply is not enough. That is not enough to do it as quickly as we need to do this.

Right now, homeland security grants also in this budget are being cut. We are seeing fewer police officers on the streets. We have not done what we need to do regarding radios and communications, and this simply is not good enough.

My amendment says we can do better, and it will provide a jump-start to do so.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise to express my appreciation to the Senate for accepting the Kohl-Snowe-Stabenow-DeWine-Lieberman amendment fully funding the Manufacturing Extension Partnership, MEP, for fiscal year 2007 at \$106 million. I am a long-time supporter of the MEP program and believe manufacturing is crucial to the U.S. economy. American manufacturers are a cornerstone of the American economy and embody the best in American values. A healthy manufacturing sector is key to better jobs, rising productivity, and higher standards of living in the United States.

Small and medium-sized manufacturers face unprecedented challenges in today's global economy. If it isn't China pirating our technologies and promising a low-wage workforce, it is soaring health care and energy costs that cut into profits. Manufacturers today are seeking ways to level the playing field.

One way to do that is through the MEP program. MEP offers resources such as organized workshops and consulting projects to manufacturers; these allow the manufacturers to streamline operations, integrate new technologies, shorten production times and lower costs. In Wisconsin, three of our largest corporations—John Deere, Harley-Davidson, and Oshkosh Truck—are working with Wisconsin MEP centers to develop domestic supply chains. I am proud to say that, thanks to MEP, these companies found it more profitable to work with small and medium sized Wisconsin firms than to look overseas for cheap labor.

You would be hard pressed to find another program that has produced the results that MEP has. In fiscal year 2004, MEP clients reported 43,624 new or retained workers, sales of \$4.532 billion, cost savings of \$721 million, and plant and equipment investments of \$941 million.

The Senate, in accepting this amendment, clearly recognizes the importance of manufacturing and the role it plays in our everyday lives. Unfortunately, the same can not be said for the current administration. The President's fiscal year 2007 budget request for MEP was \$46.3 million, a 56 percent decrease from the \$106 million appropriated for fiscal year 2006. Once again, it will be up to my colleagues and I in Congress to see to it that MEP is fully funded for fiscal year 2007. In an effort to invest in the future of manufacturing, I worked with Senator SMITH and Senator DEWINE to introduce the Manufacturing Technology Competitiveness Act of 2005 which would fund manufacturing related programs including MEP and the Advanced Technology Program—for 3 years.

Manufacturing is an integral part of a web of inter-industry relationships that create a stronger economy. Manufacturing sells goods to other sectors in the economy and, in turn, buys products and services from them. Manufacturing spurs demand for everything from raw materials to intermediate components to software to financial, legal, health, accounting, transportation, and other services in the course of doing business.

The future of manufacturing in the United States will be largely determined by how well small and medium-sized manufacturers cope with the changes in today's global economy. To be successful, manufacturers need state-of-the-art technologies to craft products more efficiently, a skilled workforce to operate those technologies, and a commitment from the government to provide the resources to allow manufacturers to remain competitive.

At a time when economic recovery, supply chain reliability for consumer and defense goods, and global competitiveness are national priorities, I believe MEP continues to be a wise investment. I want to thank the chairman and ranking member of the Budget Committee for accepting this amendment and recognizing the importance of the MEP program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, the Stabenow amendment would pencil in \$5 billion for interoperable radio equipment into the budget resolution but provides no money for the first responders. But when the junior Senator from Michigan has been given opportunity to vote for real money for police and firefighters, she has repeatedly voted no. Not only has she voted no, she actively worked to kill funding for the first responders.

The Senate budget reconciliation bill last year included \$1 billion in hard dollars for grants to States and local governments for new interoperable radio equipment. Michigan would have received a portion of that money for its police and firefighters, but the Senator

from Michigan voted no. The conference report on the budget reconciliation measure dedicated \$1 billion for spectrum auction proceeds for interoperable equipment for first responders. Again, the Senator from Michigan voted no.

Fortunately, she lost that vote. The bill with \$1 billion was signed into law, and money is now being made available for important grants.

When the Defense appropriations conference report was considered last December, I added another \$1 billion for interoperable communications equipment. That was long after Hurricane Katrina had revealed to all of us the importance of communications equipment in a disaster. The measure included another \$1 billion for grants to high-risk cities, such as Detroit. The Senator from Michigan helped filibuster that bill, and then she supported efforts to strip money out of the measure and led the charge against those funds and was successful in deleting the money. You can't have it both ways. I oppose the Stabenow amendment.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays and also simply indicate it is unfortunate to hear that kind of personal inaccurate attack.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3056. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 45 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Akaka	Harkin	Murray
Baucus	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Bayh	Jeffords	Nelson (NE)
Biden	Johnson	Obama
Bingaman	Kennedy	Pryor
Boxer	Kerry	Reed
Byrd	Kohl	Reid
Cantwell	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Clinton	Lautenberg	Salazar
Conrad	Leahy	Sarbanes
Dodd	Levin	Schumer
Dorgan	Lieberman	Stabenow
Durbin	Lincoln	Wyden
Feingold	Menendez	
Feinstein	Mikulski	

NAYS—55

Alexander	Bunning	Coburn
Allard	Burns	Cochran
Allen	Burr	Collins
Bennett	Carper	Cornyn
Bond	Chafee	Craig
Brownback	Chambliss	Crapo

DeMint	Inhofe	Smith
DeWine	Isakson	Snowe
Dole	Kyl	Specter
Domenici	Lott	Stevens
Ensign	Lugar	Sununu
Enzi	Martinez	Talent
Frist	McCain	Thomas
Graham	McConnell	Thune
Grassley	Murkowski	Vitter
Gregg	Roberts	Voinovich
Hagel	Santorum	Warner
Hatch	Sessions	
Hutchison	Shelby	

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman Dayton

The amendment (No. 3056) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, at this point I ask unanimous consent that after we have completed the final vote in this group, which has been ordered, which is the Santorum vote, we will then turn to an amendment by Senator CONRAD about avian flu and an amendment by Senator BURR on avian flu. Prior to those two amendments, there will be 5 minutes for Senator CONRAD and 5 minutes for Senator BURR to speak before we go to those votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask, as we proceed forward, that we deem the yeas and nays to have been ordered on all the amendments that have been pending.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. And all votes be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, might I urge our colleagues to try to help us move through this. If we don't get co-operation, we are going to be here until Saturday morning. If you lay out the number of amendments that are pending here, we are going to be here until Saturday morning. We urge colleagues, let's get these amendments done in 10 minutes. Please, colleagues who have amendments that don't have to be offered here, please withhold; otherwise, literally we are here until Saturday morning.

AMENDMENT NO. 3061

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We have 2 minutes evenly divided prior to the vote on the McConnell amendment.

The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask you notify me at 30 seconds, so I can turn the microphone over to Senator MCCONNELL.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, since 9/11, Congress and the administration have done so much to secure our homeland, but the area that we still must work on is port security. We have vulnerabilities because we don't have enough coverage overseas with customs

and border agents. They need to be able to inspect the containers that will come to America. Our officers working with the host governments need to certify the contents of these containers at the point of origin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Thirty seconds.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. This will reduce our reliance on the foreign governments' information that we may or may not be able to verify.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we have had a lot of talk about the security of our ports over the last few weeks, a lot of talk about where the containers originate, what boats are to get here, and who manages the ports but very little talk about who unloads the cargo. What this amendment would also do is provide for background checks on people working in our ports who are unloading the cargo. It makes no sense to ignore the personnel and the quality of personnel in our ports in the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired. Who yields time? The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I would like to speak for a minute in opposition.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I am pleased my Republican colleagues have joined my call to strengthen security at our ports by offering this amendment to increase port security funding by \$978 million. Last week our colleagues voted down in the Budget Committee, on party lines, my amendment to increase port security funding by \$965 million. So I am glad our colleagues are about to vote for port security funding right after they voted against it last week.

We know our ports are one of the weakest links in our Nation's homeland security system, and it is crucial that this Nation act to make them more secure before a terrorist attack, not after.

I applaud the increased funding for the Coast Guard in this amendment. I would like this body to continue to work on how we allocate the money this amendment provides, so we can increase the number of containers that are actually scanned or inspected before they enter the country. I hope we will have the opportunity to do so in conference.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 46 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Durbin	McConnell
Allard	Ensign	Menendez
Allen	Enzi	Mikulski
Bayh	Feingold	Murkowski
Bennett	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Biden	Frist	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Graham	Obama
Bond	Grassley	Pryor
Boxer	Gregg	Reed
Brownback	Hagel	Roberts
Bunning	Harkin	Rockefeller
Burns	Hatch	Salazar
Burr	Hutchison	Santorum
Byrd	Inhofe	Sarbanes
Cantwell	Inouye	Schumer
Carper	Isakson	Sessions
Chafee	Jeffords	Shelby
Chambliss	Kennedy	Smith
Clinton	Kerry	Snowe
Coburn	Kohl	Specter
Cochran	Kyl	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Stevens
Cornyn	Lautenberg	Sununu
Craig	Levin	Talent
Crapo	Lieberman	Thomas
DeMint	Lincoln	Thune
DeWine	Lott	Vitter
Dole	Lugar	Voinovich
Domenici	Martinez	Warner
Dorgan	McCain	Wyden

NAYS—8

Akaka	Dodd	Murray
Baucus	Johnson	Reid
Conrad	Leahy	

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman	Dayton
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The amendment (No. 3061) was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, will the Chair advise us as to how much time that vote took?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Sixteen minutes.

Mr. GREGG. We are going to be here a long time if we keep doing 10-minute votes for 16 minutes. I have spoken with Senator CONRAD. It is my sense that we should start cutting these votes off. We have a whole series of votes. The next one will take 10 minutes. We are going to start to enforce that timeframe.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, perhaps I can help put this in perspective. We have 110 amendments pending, with more amendments coming in every hour. We have just been called and asked to draft six more amendments in the last hour.

I hope people understand where this is headed. If we are going to have 16-minute votes and we are going to vote on another 110 amendments, we are going to be here until noon on Saturday. That is where this is all headed.

If we don't start getting cooperation from Members here to not offer amendments which they could offer some-

where else, and if we don't get some cooperation from Members on having votes that really last 10 minutes, I assure you we are going to be here all day Friday—first of all, late tomorrow night, we are going to be here all day Friday, we are going to be here late Friday night, and we are going to be here at noon on Saturday. Colleagues can choose. It is out of our control. We don't control this. Colleagues can decide whether we are going to have some reasonable outcome here or whether we will be here until Saturday noon.

AMENDMENT NO. 3054

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 2 minutes equally divided prior to the vote on the Menendez amendment.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to add Senators KOHL, BIDEN, SARBANES, and MIKULSKI as cosponsors.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate just voted to concur with me that we need to spend about \$1 billion on port security. The difference between this amendment which we just passed and the amendment we are about to vote on is that this is real money that we paid for, and we direct the money in a more comprehensive way to fund security operations at our ports.

This amendment puts us on the road to 100 percent scanning of containers entering into this country by increasing the number of inspectors abroad and funding the latest technology in our own ports.

I strongly believe we need to strengthen security. This will put us on the road to increasing scanning, inspections, funding for port security grants, and creating real security here at home.

I urge adoption of the amendment.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Menendez amendment that increases funding for port security by \$965 million. The amendment is fully offset by closing \$965 million in corporate tax loopholes and would reduce the debt by an additional \$965 million.

What the recent Dubai Ports World deal certainly has revealed is the importance of port security and our apparent vulnerability. Each year, 10 million cargo containers enter our ports, and we inspect roughly 6 percent of them. That means only about 600,000 are seen by our security officials, while the other 9.4 million are being handled exclusively by the shippers, port operators, and others. When we consider the fact that just one of the six ports whose operations would have taken over by DP World is equipped with a working radiation-detection system, we can begin to appreciate how crucial it is to address this issue.

In 2003, Admiral Collins of the U.S. Coast Guard testified that it will cost \$7 billion over the next 10 years to fully secure our ports. We have not even

come close to funding port security at that pace. Though \$7 billion may seem a daunting figure, suffering a catastrophic terrorist attack at one of our major ports would cost exponentially more. A recent war game conducted by Federal security agencies imagined all 360 major ports shut down for 9 days—which would not be an inconceivable step to take following a major terrorist attack upon a U.S. port. Such a shutdown would cost our country \$58 billion and that doesn't even consider the direct physical costs of the attack itself. Compared to this grim scenario, investing \$7 billion now to secure our ports is wise.

The Menendez amendment moves us closer towards achieving the goal of 100-percent scanning of all cargo containers which pass through our ports. With \$600 million dedicated to the port security grant program administered by the Department of Homeland Security, \$100 million for new inspectors and security personnel, \$100 million for research and development to create better scanning technology, \$105 million for better radiation detection equipment, \$10 million for deploying better scanning technology abroad, and \$50 million to assist developing countries with cargo scanning, we will significantly improve port security.

We can prevent a terrorist attack on our ports, but it will take Federal resources and determination to do so. We all hope we are not left in the wake of a terrorist attack that could have been prevented had we only made the necessary investments to better fund port security. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support the Menendez amendment which will reinvigorate and finance our commitment to secure our ports.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Senators MENENDEZ and LAUTENBERG's amendment to increase funding for port security. As the cochairman of the Commerce Committee and a Senator representing an island State, I place a particularly high priority on port security, and I know first hand that it is not receiving the resources that are necessary. Budgets are a reflection of priorities, and our budget must place far greater emphasis on this critical component of our national and economic security.

I feel compelled to remind this body that, since 2002, it has been given a litany of opportunities to bolster port security resources, and it has routinely rejected them.

As we consider this year's budget, I would like to recall the discussion we had around this time in 2003. During the budget debate, this body unanimously supported an amendment to provide \$2 billion to port security. Yet 3 weeks later, when the Senate considered the supplemental appropriations legislation to address funding for the war in Iraq and homeland security, the Senate rejected the amendment that would have provided immediately the actual money for port security funding.

It was a lesson in cynicism that I have not forgotten.

Given the recent attention to the Nation's lingering, significant port security inadequacies, it is my hope that the Senate will have the wisdom to choose a different course this time around.

If there is one silver lining to the Dubai Ports World debacle, it is that the country is now paying close attention to port and cargo security. The heartland is learning what the coasts have known for many years: our national economy and physical security depend on strong port security. They are now familiar with the statistic that 95 percent of the Nation's cargo comes through the ports, and that very little of that cargo is inspected. The American public now knows that more needs to be done.

Maritime commerce is essential to the American economy. Many of our Nation's manufacturers and retailers depend on on-time delivery, and any disruption to the flow of commerce could have disastrous consequences for American businesses and the economy as a whole.

Despite this fact, the administration still fails to make port security a top priority. It has consistently submitted inadequate funding requests and has routinely missed critical security deadlines that were required by law. In fact, the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, only recently submitted its National Maritime Transportation Security Plan. The report was due in April 2005.

Given the administration's poor record on port security and its poor judgment on the Dubai Ports World deal, I am left wondering what it will take for this administration to take port security seriously.

It was Congress that put a halt to the Dubai Ports World takeover, and it will have to be Congress that provides the port security funding that the administration's budget lacks. The amendment put forward by Senators MENENDEZ and LAUTENBERG calls for a funding level that is a far better reflection of port security's importance to the country. While it will not solve all of the current inadequacies, it will bring us far closer to what will be required.

Several other Members will be introducing amendments that enhance resources for transportation security, and while I would prefer specific offsets, I applaud their focus on port security and strongly support them. Our committee has held numerous oversight hearings in the area of transportation security, and we recognize that much more needs to be done. The latest Department of Homeland Security inspector general's report indicated that the DHS has made considerable improvements in the administration of the port security grant program. It is beginning to deliver the funding the way Congress intended, consistent with the Maritime Transportation Security Act, MTSA. Now, we must dedicate

more substantial resources to this effort.

While increased funding is a critical step, we must not lose sight of the long-term security improvements that will be necessary for port security. In November, the Senate Commerce Committee unanimously approved the Transportation Security Improvement Act, S. 1052, which addresses a litany of security shortcomings across all modes of transportation. Specifically, title V of our bill tackles port and cargo security inadequacies. It improves the examination of cargo before it reaches our shores, ensures the resumption of commerce in the event of an attack, and takes greater advantage of coordinated, interagency port security efforts.

Of course, I would like to see passage of our full bill, but at a minimum, I urge the Senate to take up title V of our bill and pass it as soon as possible. Our approach has broad bipartisan support, and it will improve security while maintaining the jurisdiction and transportation expertise of the Commerce Committee. The time is right to pass these needed security improvements, and I am hopeful that the Senate will take up our measure as soon as possible.

In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to support this important and timely amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I hope our colleagues will not vote for the amendment.

The Senate just voted overwhelmingly to put almost \$1 billion into port security. That is the right thing to do, but the right way to pay for it is out of the 920 account. To make this a priority, let us do it right. The Menendez amendment would increase taxes to pay for port security. We do not need to do that. What we should do is the right thing—provide more inspectors and make sure our ports are secure, and do it the right way with real money that is already there.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COBURN). The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been ordered, and the clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 47 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Akaka	Harkin	Murray
Baucus	Inouye	Nelson (FL)
Bayh	Jeffords	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Johnson	Obama
Boxer	Kennedy	Pryor
Byrd	Kerry	Reed
Cantwell	Kohl	Reid
Carper	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Clinton	Lautenberg	Salazar
Conrad	Leahy	Sarbanes
Dodd	Levin	Schumer
Dorgan	Lieberman	Stabenow
Durbin	Lincoln	Wyden
Feingold	Menendez	
Feinstein	Mikulski	

NAYS—53

Alexander	DeWine	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Domenici	Murkowski
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Bond	Enzi	Santorum
Brownback	Frist	Sessions
Bunning	Graham	Shelby
Burns	Grassley	Smith
Burr	Gregg	Snowe
Chafee	Hagel	Stevens
Chambliss	Hatch	Sununu
Coburn	Hutchison	Talent
Cochran	Inhofe	Thomas
Collins	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—4

Biden	Dayton
Coleman	Specter

The amendment (No. 3054) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. BURNS. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3018

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent the yeas and nays be vitiated on the Chambliss amendment numbered 3018.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. CONRAD. We have no objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment No. 3018.

The amendment (No. 3018) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3073

Mr. GREGG. The next amendment is the amendment of Senator GRASSLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 2 minutes equally divided.

Mr. CONRAD. Senator GRASSLEY's amendment is the next order in the queue.

Mr. GREGG. I will speak to Senator GRASSLEY's amendment.

What Senator GRASSLEY is suggesting is we give the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to extend the signup time for senior citizens, and if we extend such signup times, there will be no penalty against the senior citizens.

It is an excellent amendment. I hope it will be supported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time to speak in opposition?

Mr. CONRAD. I yield time to the Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, the question is, do you want to help the program or do you want to help the people? Members have all heard from their senior citizens. They are confused, they are bewildered, and in some cases frightened about this deadline coming up. They want some additional time. They are confused with this multiplicity of plans.

Senator GRASSLEY's amendment would only give discretion to the Secretary of HHS. They have already testified they do not want to extend the program.

Members are going to have an opportunity to vote on the amendment that follows that will actually extend the deadline for the rest of the year, 2006.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, is there any time left on my side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Twenty-three seconds.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized for 23 seconds.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, what the Secretary said was that this was a decision by the Congress. We are involved in that decision, a decision today to give the Secretary authority to do it if it needs to be done, and do it not until it needs to be done, rather than sending a signal that you can procrastinate again for another 6 months.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment. The yeas and nays have been previously ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 76, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 48 Leg.]

YEAS—76

Alexander	Cornyn	Inouye
Allard	Craig	Isakson
Allen	Crapo	Johnson
Bayh	DeMint	Kerry
Bennett	Dodd	Kohl
Biden	Dole	Kyl
Bingaman	Domenici	Levin
Bond	Dorgan	Lieberman
Boxer	Durbin	Lott
Brownback	Enzi	Lugar
Bunning	Feinstein	Martinez
Burns	Frist	McConnell
Burr	Graham	Menendez
Byrd	Grassley	Mikulski
Cantwell	Gregg	Murkowski
Carper	Hagel	Murray
Chambliss	Hatch	Nelson (NE)
Coburn	Hutchison	Pryor
Cochran	Inhofe	Roberts

Rockefeller
Salazar
Santorum
Sarbanes
Schumer
Sessions
Shelby

Smith
Specter
Stabenow
Stevens
Sununu
Talent
Thomas

Thune
Vitter
Voinovich
Warner
Wyden

NAYS—22

Akaka
Baucus
Chafee
Clinton
Collins
Conrad
DeWine
Ensign

Feingold
Harkin
Jeffords
Kennedy
Landrieu
Lautenberg
Leahy
Lincoln

McCain
Nelson (FL)
Obama
Reed
Reid
Snowe

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman

Dayton

The amendment (No. 3073) was agreed to.

Mr. GREGG. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3009

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Nelson amendment No. 3009 is now under consideration with 2 minutes equally divided.

The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, this amendment is what Senators have been hearing from their senior citizens. They want to extend the deadline. My amendment would put it in law that the deadline is extended. Why be for a program instead of being for the people? They are confused. They need more time. They are bewildered and, in some cases, knowing that that 1 percent-a-month penalty is hanging over their heads, they are frightened. They are also frightened if they choose the wrong program, then find out they can't get the prescription drugs they need for their quality of life. I urge Members to vote for the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. GRASSLEY. The Nelson amendment is the wrong idea at the wrong time. The amendment doesn't even provide the resources for enrolling people afterwards. We did in the amendment just adopted. How are we going to get people to enroll if the administration doesn't have the resources to do it? It is too early to make a decision, when we don't have final enrollment numbers yet. Right now enrollment is going very well. A quarter of a million people sign up every week. Many who are calling for delay in the enrollment deadline didn't support the legislation 2 or 3 years ago. They have admitted that. They have been encouraging citizens not to enroll. Extending the deadline until the end of the year is a cynical attempt to tell seniors not to enroll this year. The other side says May 15 is an arbitrary deadline. Americans live with deadlines every day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3009.

The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "yea."

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 49 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Akaka	Feingold	Murray
Baucus	Feinstein	Nelson (FL)
Bayh	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Biden	Inouye	Obama
Bingaman	Jeffords	Pryor
Boxer	Johnson	Reed
Byrd	Kennedy	Reid
Cantwell	Kerry	Rockefeller
Carper	Kohl	Salazar
Chafee	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Clinton	Lautenberg	Schumer
Collins	Leahy	Snowe
Conrad	Levin	Specter
DeWine	Lieberman	Stabenow
Dodd	Lincoln	Wyden
Dorgan	Menendez	
Durbin	Mikulski	

NAYS—49

Alexander	Domenici	McConnell
Allard	Ensign	Murkowski
Allen	Enzi	Roberts
Bennett	Frist	Santorum
Bond	Graham	Sessions
Brownback	Grassley	Shelby
Bunning	Gregg	Smith
Burns	Hagel	Stevens
Burr	Hatch	Sununu
Chambliss	Hutchison	Talent
Coburn	Inhofe	Thomas
Cochran	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	
Dole	McCain	

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman

Dayton

The amendment (No. 3009) was rejected.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I simply note that the way this is working, these are 10-minute votes. We have been reasonably generous by letting them go to 12 minutes, but we are not letting them go past 12 minutes. I believe I speak for Senator CONRAD. We are going to insist on getting these votes done. We are on to the next amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 3004

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now consider the Snowe-Wyden amendment.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, the amendment which Senator WYDEN and I are offering will address the high cost

of our Medicare prescription drug benefit. It does this not by price setting or mandating a drug formulary, but by providing our drug plans with the resource of the HHS Secretary. Since Medicare is paying 75 percent of a beneficiary's drug costs from \$250 up to \$2,250 in spending, and the cost of this benefit over the next ten years is estimated to exceed \$700 billion, it is simply common sense that the Secretary should be able to assist when the plans need help.

Our amendment states two circumstances in which the Secretary must participate in drug price negotiation. If the Secretary needs to provide a drug plan due to lack of competition, he must negotiate competitive prices for his own "fallback" plan. And just as reasonable, if a drug plan requests his assistance in negotiations, then he should be responsive to that need.

The Congressional Budget Office has told us that when a drug lacks competition, a manufacturer may not negotiate in good faith. So when a plan calls for help in this circumstance, the Secretary shouldn't be forced to be unresponsive. As CBO has described, the savings could be substantial. For example, if 29 million beneficiaries enroll in Part D, and 1 in 4 used a single source "blockbuster" drug such as a lipid-lowering drug costing \$250 per month, the annual cost for that single product would exceed \$21 billion. If the Secretary could help plans raise the discount on such a drug by just 10 percent, the annual savings would amount to \$2.18 billion. This illustrates how in this special situation, the role of the Secretary could be vital.

Let me be clear—this amendment does not allow price-setting. The language is clear: "the Secretary may not require a particular formulary or institute a price structure for the reimbursement of Part D drugs."

The AMA, the AARP, and many other are advocating for this authority, because they want to protect our seniors access to drugs as much as we do. I urge my colleagues to join us in assuring we keep our promise to our seniors.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, one of the things on this issue that is so misleading is the impression that this legislation does not allow Medicare to negotiate. The opposite is true.

This legislation requires negotiation. That is what the plans are doing all the time to drive down the price of drugs—what it does to drive down the price of the premium way below what we thought it would be. Again, everything is backward when they talk about this. In the real world, there are choices. Wherever you want to go for any consumer products, those stores negotiate prices to get good prices. It is just a way to get the job done. Statistics that have come in on this show that competition is driving down the price of

drugs—the 25 leading drugs—by 35 percent on average this ought to show that this process is working.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired. The yeas and nays have been ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment of the Senator from Maine. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant morning business clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "no."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 50 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Akaka	Graham	Murkowski
Bayh	Harkin	Murray
Biden	Hutchison	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Inouye	Obama
Boxer	Jeffords	Pryor
Byrd	Johnson	Reed
Cantwell	Kennedy	Reid
Carper	Kerry	Rockefeller
Chafee	Kohl	Salazar
Clinton	Landrieu	Sarbanes
Collins	Lautenberg	Schumer
Conrad	Leahy	Shelby
DeWine	Levin	Smith
Dodd	Lieberman	Snowe
Dorgan	Lincoln	Specter
Durbin	McCain	Stabenow
Feingold	Menendez	Stevens
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—44

Alexander	Crapo	Lugar
Allard	DeMint	Martinez
Allen	Dole	McConnell
Baucus	Domenici	Nelson (NE)
Bennett	Ensign	Roberts
Bond	Enzi	Santorum
Brownback	Frist	Sessions
Bunning	Grassley	Sununu
Burns	Gregg	Talent
Burr	Hagel	Thomas
Chambliss	Hatch	Thune
Coburn	Inhofe	Vitter
Cochran	Isakson	Voinovich
Cornyn	Kyl	Warner
Craig	Lott	

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman	Dayton
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The amendment (No. 3004) was agreed to.

Mr. OBAMA. I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3086

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Byrd amendment will be considered next, with 2 minutes equally divided for debate.

The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SCHUMER be added as a cosponsor to my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, once again the White House has proposed a level of funding for Amtrak that will result in bankruptcy for the company, endangering rail service in every region of the Nation.

Two amendments have been offered to increase Amtrak's funding to a level of \$1.45 billion. My amendment, which is fully paid for, would provide the additional funds necessary for the Appropriations Committee to approve \$1.45 billion for Amtrak.

The amendment offered by the distinguished Senator from Pennsylvania pretends to pay for the increase by cutting something called function 920 allowances. It assumes deeper cuts for education, for low-income home energy assistance, for border and port security, and for our troops.

I urge Members to show support—real support—for Amtrak by voting for my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Who seeks time? The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I must rise in opposition to this amendment as it would exceed the caps and would end up raising taxes. We are going to have an amendment that follows this amendment which makes a commitment to Amtrak, which does it under the caps, therefore, sets the priorities correctly, and that is the proper way to do this.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3086. Under the previous order, the yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "no."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "yea."

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 51 Leg.]

YEAS—44

Akaka	Dorgan	Leahy
Baucus	Durbin	Levin
Bayh	Feingold	Lieberman
Biden	Feinstein	Lincoln
Bingaman	Harkin	Menendez
Boxer	Inouye	Murray
Byrd	Jeffords	Nelson (FL)
Cantwell	Johnson	Nelson (NE)
Carper	Kennedy	Obama
Chafee	Kerry	Pryor
Clinton	Kohl	Reed
Conrad	Landrieu	Reid
Dodd	Lautenberg	

Rockefeller
Salazar

Sarbanes
Schumer

Stabenow
Wyden

NAYS—53

Alexander
Allard
Allen
Bennett
Bond
Brownback
Bunning
Burns
Burr
Chambliss
Coburn
Cochran
Collins
Cornyn
Craig
Crapo
DeMint
DeWine

Dole
Domenici
Ensign
Enzi
Frist
Graham
Grassley
Gregg
Hagel
Hatch
Hutchison
Inhofe
Isakson
Kyl
Lott
Thune
Vitter
Martinez
McCain

McConnell
Murkowski
Roberts
Santorum
Sessions
Shelby
Smith
Snowe
Specter
Stevens
Sununu
Talent
Thomas
Thune
Vitter
Voinovich
Warner

NOT VOTING—3

Coleman Dayton Mikulski

The amendment (No. 3086) was rejected.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Santorum amendment will now be considered with 2 minutes equally divided for debate on the amendment. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, this amendment does what the Byrd amendment does, except it doesn't raises taxes. It offsets the money from the 920 account. I would encourage Members to let their voices be heard in support of Amtrak funding to make sure that the Appropriations Committee understands that this is a continuing priority for the United States, and I ask for a "yea" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who rises in opposition?

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, we are talking about a proposal that has no funding for it. You reach into the 920 barrel and there is nothing there, you can't come up with any money. But in the process, the Senator from Pennsylvania did acknowledge that the President's budget is way off line because now we are talking about \$1.5 billion; whereas, otherwise, it is \$500 million less. So while this bill is imperfect we do want to see Amtrak supported, and I hope that we will be able to resolve it in the appropriations process to get it to where it needs to be. But this amendment is not going to do it. It is half a loaf and, at this point, we have little choice.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3015. Under the previous order, the yeas and nays have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. The following Senator was necessarily absent: the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) would vote "nay."

The result was announced—yeas 39, nays 59, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 52 Leg.]

YEAS—39

Allen
Baucus
Bayh
Bond
Burns
Burr
Byrd
Carper
Chafee
Cochran
Collins
DeWine
Dole

Domenici
Dorgan
Feingold
Frist
Hagel
Hatch
Hutchison
Jeffords
Johnson
Kohl
Landrieu
Lieberman
Lott

Lugar
Mikulski
Murkowski
Nelson (NE)
Rockefeller
Santorum
Sarbanes
Smith
Snowe
Specter
Stevens
Talent
Warner

NAYS—59

Akaka
Alexander
Allard
Bennett
Biden
Bingaman
Boxer
Brownback
Bunning
Cantwell
Chambliss
Clinton
Coburn
Conrad
Cornyn
Craig
Crapo
DeMint
Dodd
Durbin

Ensign
Enzi
Feinstein
Graham
Grassley
Gregg
Harkin
Inhofe
Inouye
Isakson
Kennedy
Kerry
Kyl
Lautenberg
Leahy
Levin
Lincoln
Martinez
McCain
McConnell

Menendez
Murray
Nelson (FL)
Obama
Pryor
Reed
Reid
Roberts
Salazar
Schumer
Sessions
Shelby
Stabenow
Sununu
Thomas
Thune
Vitter
Voinovich
Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Coleman Dayton

The amendment (No. 3015) was rejected.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, for the information of our colleagues, that was the last rollcall vote for today. We will begin voting tomorrow morning, most probably on the two avian flu amendments which we were discussing during the vote, at approximately 10:30.

The managers are here, and we will continue to discuss it in terms of the timing and the exact schedule for tomorrow.

There are no more rollcall votes tonight, and we will begin voting around 10:30 tomorrow.

The more formal vote-arama, which unfortunately has become institutionalized, would be tomorrow afternoon. We will have more announcements about that.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I hope colleagues understand that for this budget cycle we have lost time to a number of extraneous events which could not be helped. But it means we have less time than we have had in previous years.

I hope my colleagues understand that we have put the debt limit discussion in the middle of this.

We have had a number of other events, such as the joint session.

As a result, we have less time for amendments.

I beg the indulgence of colleagues in understanding that now the only way we can finish is if we have very tight time agreements tomorrow, and if we exercise discipline among ourselves in terms of the number of amendments that we offer. That is the only conceivable way we can finish by tomorrow night.

I urge colleagues to think very carefully about amendments which they might want to offer.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. Yes, I would be happy to yield.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, would the Senator agree with me that it is very fitting that the debt limit discussion should be inserted right in the middle of discussion of the budget resolution since this budget resolution will add very substantially to the deficit and drive the debt up even further, requiring this vote that is going to come to raise the debt ceiling? What is the amount by which the debt ceiling will be raised?

Mr. CONRAD. The debt limit request will be to raise the debt by nearly \$800 billion—\$781 billion.

Mr. SARBANES. It underscores the deeper hole that these budgets are driving us to over the last 5 years, does it not?

Mr. CONRAD. The Senator makes a very good point. It is an indication that we keep adding debt on top of debt. Of course, this budget will add \$3 trillion to the debt—more than \$3 trillion over the next 5 years.

I think it is further confirmation that we are off track in terms of the fiscal policy of this country, and not a little off track—way off track.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be added as cosponsors to amendment No. 3018: Senators GRASSLEY, DEWINE, BURNS, COBURN, and VITTER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The minority leader is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 3115

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for himself and Mrs. CLINTON, proposes an amendment numbered 3115.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase funding in FY 2007 by \$347 million to restore funding or provide increased funding over FY 2006 for programs and policies that support the delivery of contraceptive services and medically accurate information in order to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies, including Title X of the Public Health Service Act, and to restore funding or provide increased funding over FY 2006 for programs that help women have healthy pregnancies and healthy children, including the Child Care Development Block Grant, Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, Healthy Start, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women Infants and Children paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes)

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$347,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by \$124,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by \$27,000,000.

On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by \$61,000,000.

On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 20, line 16, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by \$223,000,000.

On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$198,000,000.

On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$347,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this amendment was offered on behalf of the Senator from Nevada and the Senator from New York, Senator CLINTON.

One of the most heated debates of recent years has been on the issue of abortion. People on both sides of the issue feel very strongly. They have argued, they have demonstrated, and they have protested with emotion and passion.

The approval last week of a South Dakota law banning virtually all abor-

tions has only intensified the already strong feelings on both sides of this issue.

The issue is not going to go away very soon. And I doubt that one side will be able to suddenly convince the other to drop its deeply held beliefs.

But there is a need—and an opportunity—for us to find common ground.

Today, I am joining with Senator CLINTON to propose an amendment that offers not only common ground but common sense.

Whether you are pro-life or pro-choice, Democrat or Republican, our amendment advances two key goals which we should all share:

No. 1, reducing the number of unintended pregnancies and the resulting abortions.

No. 2, helping women have healthy pregnancies and healthy children.

Our amendment will make sure that there is money available in the budget to enact policy to support these important goals.

I repeat—reducing the number of unintended pregnancies and resulting abortions and helping women have healthy pregnancies and healthy children.

Specifically, our amendment would allow us to increase funding for the National Family Planning Program, title X. It would pass the Equity in Prescription Insurance and Contraceptive Coverage Act so that we may end insurance discrimination against women.

I might add that the distinguished Senator from Maine, Ms. SNOWE, has worked on this for many years.

Our amendment would improve awareness and understanding of emergency contraception, and our amendment would improve teen pregnancy prevention programs.

This amendment would also restore cuts and provide funding for crucial programs that support pregnant women and their children.

The United States has among the highest rates of unintended pregnancies of all industrialized nations. Half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended.

And about half of those pregnancies end in abortions.

It doesn't have to be this way. Most of these unintended pregnancies—and the resulting abortions—can be prevented.

One of the most important steps we can take to prevent unintended pregnancies is ensuring that American women have access to affordable, effective contraception.

Our amendment helps make family planning service more accessible to low-income women. It improves awareness and understanding of emergency contraception, a poorly understood yet highly effective form of contraception. It promotes teen pregnancy prevention programs, and it would end insurance discrimination against women.

These are just some of the simple but necessary steps we can and should take to prevent unintended pregnancies and reduce abortions.

It is difficult for me to understand why many of the same people who support an outright ban on abortion also oppose making contraception more accessible—particularly for low-income women who are more likely to have unplanned pregnancies. For example, a recent analysis by the non-partisan Guttmacher Institute revealed that South Dakota is one of the most difficult states for low income women to obtain contraceptives.

Reducing the number of unintended pregnancies—and the resulting abortions—should be a goal we can all share.

In addition to supporting programs that will reduce the number of unintended pregnancies, our amendment will restore cuts and provide much needed funds for programs that provide critical support for pregnant women and their children.

Our amendment says that while we should do everything we can do to prevent unintended pregnancies in the first place, we should also fund programs that support women who choose to carry their pregnancies to term and raise healthy children.

This includes funding for programs that: provide health care for pregnant women and their children, reduce infant mortality, provide child care assistance for low-income families, and provide nutritional assistance for pregnant women and children.

Our amendment gives Americans on both sides of the abortion debate the opportunity to join in the common goals of preventing unintended pregnancies, reducing abortions and supporting pregnant women and their children.

I hope my colleagues will agree to this amendment. It is important. It is important for America, and it is important for the women in America.

I want to make sure that the Senator from New York has ample time. How much time do we have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Five minutes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my statement be on leader time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I thank the Democratic leader, the Senator from Nevada, for his leadership on this issue. We have come together to present this Prevention First amendment because we believe deeply that we can do better than we are doing in our country when it comes to preventing unintended pregnancy and helping to support mothers and children.

The United States has one of the highest rates of unintended pregnancies in the industrialized world. Half of all pregnancies in our country are unintended. Nearly half of those end in abortion. In order to decrease the number of unintended pregnancies, and to decrease the number of abortions, we must make contraception

more accessible and more affordable. The Prevention First amendment ensures that we dedicate adequate funding for these programs, while at the same time the amendment provides for dedicating funding to mothers and children so children will be as healthy as possible.

This amendment sends a clear message: Women who need access to contraception to prevent unintended pregnancies will have that help. At the same time, women who are pregnant and want to have a healthy child will also have the support they need. Our amendment provides \$100 million to programs that reduce unintended pregnancy and \$247 million to programs that support and protect women and babies.

The \$100 million prevention program does four basic things. First, it increases the funds for title X, the Nation's only program solely dedicated to family planning. Title X provides high quality preventive health care and contraception to low-income individuals who may otherwise lack access to supplement care. Every year, title X services prevent approximately 1 million unintended pregnancies. But despite its proven success, this administration has continuously cut its funding.

Second, this amendment ends the current practice where some insurance companies refuse to provide coverage for contraception even though they cover other prescription drugs. Lack of coverage for contraception results in women of reproductive age paying 68 percent more in out-of-pocket costs for health care services than men of the same age. Our amendment remedies this disparity by requiring private health care plans that cover prescription drugs to also cover FDA-approved prescription contraceptives and related medical services. In our own State of New York, contraceptive equity is already the law and it should provide a real role model for the Nation. If insurance companies can cover drugs such as Viagra, they can certainly cover prescription contraception.

Third, this amendment improves public awareness of emergency contraception. Emergency contraception, also known as Plan B, is one of the most misunderstood drugs around. Some have tried to deliberately mislead its purpose. Emergency contraception prevents pregnancy. It does not interrupt or end a pregnancy. The most recent research estimates that emergency contraception could have prevented 51,000 abortions per year. Further, a study from the Journal of the American Medical Association confirms that easier access to emergency contraception does not increase sexual risk taking or greater transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.

Fourth, our amendment provides funding for programs dedicated to decreasing the teen pregnancy rate. To date, 34 percent of young women become pregnant at least once before they reach the age of 20. That results

in 820,000 teen pregnancies a year. Eight in 10, or 80 percent, of those pregnancies are unintended.

This amendment funds proven programs that will help reduce the rate of teen pregnancy by improving decision-making, improving access to education and information.

In addition to strengthening pregnancy prevention programs, our amendment also increases support for low-income mothers trying to raise healthy children. Our message in this amendment to the women of this country is clear: We will support you in your effort to prevent unintended pregnancy and we will support you in your decision to have a child.

Our amendment provides funding for programs such as the childcare and development block grant that help families afford safe quality day care; programs such as the maternal and child health block grant that ensure women have healthy pregnancies. Healthy Start and WIC Programs focus on providing nutrition for pregnant women and their infants.

I hope we could unite behind a common goal of preventing unintended pregnancies, reducing abortions, and supporting women and children's health. We hope our colleagues and the White House will work with us to put prevention first. A vote in support of this amendment is a vote to support healthy families.

I urge our colleagues to pass the Clinton-Reid amendment.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in a debate earlier today, the senior Senator from North Dakota responded to my challenge to point out a new corporate loophole closer that is not included in the tax relief reconciliation conference.

The ranking Democratic member of the Budget Committee discussed a proposal developed by the Finance Committee Democratic staff that would repeal "deferral" for controlled foreign corporations doing business in tax haven countries.

I share the senior Senator from North Dakota's concerns about the ability of large corporations to manipulate the Tax Code to shift large amounts of profits offshore. But this provision isn't the right way to address those concerns. It is both overbroad and inadequate.

It is overbroad because it would harm the competitiveness of U.S. multinationals by repealing deferral for holding company structures that allow them to efficiently allocate active foreign-generated resources among their foreign operations without incurring U.S. tax on entirely foreign transactions.

It is inadequate because it applies only to subsidiaries in black-listed countries. Companies that use tax havens for abusive purposes could easily avoid this rule by locating in a low-tax country that is not on the list, like Ireland, where we have read press reports

that companies are shifting huge profits. Treasury would have authority to add countries to the list, but does anyone think Ireland, with whom we have a tax treaty, would be added to a black list?

The way to deal with those cases is through effective transfer pricing policy and enforcement, not by curtailing deferral.

This proposal was included in the Democratic alternative to the Finance Committee bipartisan tax relief plan. When we considered the House tax relief reconciliation bill, the Democratic alternative was defeated.

Even if the tax haven proposal were viable in the Senate, it would yield only a fraction of the revenue needed to offset the cumulative effect of the many Democratic amendments to increase spending.

The effect of using such proposals, which aren't viable in the Senate, even if successful, would be to drive down the tax relief number.

The result of a lower net tax relief number is that we would lack the necessary tax relief in the budget to accommodate tax relief proposals supported on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, yesterday I offered an amendment to the budget resolution with the Senator from Maine and the Senator from New Jersey that would have increased funding for several education and training programs and raised the maximum Pell grant to \$4,500. Regrettably, by a vote of 50-to-50, the amendment was not adopted. More than 100 educational organizations supported the Kennedy-Collins-Menendez amendment, and yesterday, I submitted to the RECORD several of the support letters we received from these organizations.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD additional letters from the American Association of Community Colleges, the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium, and the National Education Association.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2006.

Hon. EDWARD M. KENNEDY,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR KENNEDY: As a follow-up to our letter this morning urging support for the critical Specter-Harkin amendment to the budget resolution, we would also like to encourage your support for the Kennedy-Collins-Menendez amendment, which would add \$6.3 billion targeted to higher education programs.

Improving access to postsecondary education is essential to ensuring a well-educated workforce that is competitive for the 21st century. Unfortunately, too many lower-income families are finding higher education out of reach as costs become prohibitive.

The Kennedy-Collins-Menendez amendment will help open the doors of opportunity for students, workers, and families, including by securing resources for an increase in the maximum Pell Grant award and restoration of programs slated for elimination in the proposed budget such as Career and Technical Education, TRIO, and GEAR-UP.

The Specter-Harkin amendment will provide the foundation for restoring education funds cut in the past two years. The Kennedy-Collins-Menendez amendment builds on this foundation by targeting additional resources to expand postsecondary opportunities. We urge your support for both of these important amendments.

Sincerely,

DIANE SHUST,
Director of Government Relations.

RANDALL MOODY,
Manager of Federal Policy and Politics.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY
AND EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2006.

Hon. EDWARD KENNEDY,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATORS KENNEDY AND MENENDEZ: On behalf of the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing higher education opportunities for low-income students, our corporate and foundation partners, and the millions of students and families we serve, I write to enthusiastically support the Menendez-Kennedy Amendment.

One principal program we work with is the Gaining Early Awareness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), which is currently providing 1.5 million low-income students in 47 states. GEAR UP helps provide students with the tools necessary to set high academic aspirations, capitalize on higher education options, and become better academically prepared for the rigors of higher education.

While we are sympathetic to the fiscal challenges that accompany the upcoming FY 2007 appropriations cycle, our long-term economic vitality as a nation will depend on our ability to produce an increasing number of college graduates to remain competitive in business, science, technology and other fields that demand a high quality education. In the global marketplace, it is clear that if left unabated, the educational disparities between high-income and low-income families will have negative consequences that will resonate throughout the American economy for decades to come.

These challenges can be overcome if we continue to focus on increasing higher education opportunities for underserved students. One study suggests that if we can raise minority student participation in higher education to equal that of non-minority students, over \$300 billion would be added in gross national product and tax revenues alone. The continued federal investment in GEAR UP can and will go a long way to ensuring the fiscal and social health of our nation, our communities, and our families.

While the recent focus on strengthening America's competitiveness is welcome in the national dialogue, our colleagues and constituents believe very strongly that funding new initiatives at the expense of proven programs such as GEAR UP, is at best counterproductive, and at worst, a broken commitment to low-income students and families nationwide.

Through the creation of GEAR UP partnerships between families, community-based organizations, businesses, schools, and institutions of higher education, we are able to have a far greater impact than working in isolation. By working together towards common goals, we are ensuring that students stay in school, raise their academic and career aspirations, succeed in challenging courses, and receive quality counseling as they prepare for higher education. Researchers at the Pennsylvania State University as well as the national program evaluation (administered by the U.S. Department of Education) have concluded that GEAR UP students are making significant academic gains in reading and math, two critical components for college success. In addition, GEAR UP students and families report that their academic ambitions and awareness of higher education options have improved significantly as a result of the program. All of this comes at a small investment of less than \$300 per student annually. Simply stated, GEAR UP is a cost-effective solution to raising the academic skills and aspirations of an entire generation of students that may otherwise be left behind.

The Menendez-Kennedy Amendment recognizes that as a nation we have made a compact with our students that should not be broken. We promised students and families that if they set high educational goals, worked hard, and persevered through a challenging course of study, that our nation would provide them with the basic resources necessary to assist them along the pathway to a college degree. With the proposed cuts to GEAR UP and other critical programs that empower students and families to succeed, we will break this promise, risk turning our back on our students, and place the dream of a college degree out of the reach of low-income and working families.

Speaking for the students and families we serve, I thank you for the extraordinary leadership you have demonstrated through the Menendez-Kennedy Amendment. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

HECTOR GARZA,
President.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELING,
Alexandria, VA, March 14, 2006.

SENATOR,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR: On behalf of more than 20,000 high school counselors and college admission officers that are members of the National Association for College Admission Counseling and its state/regional affiliates, I write to urge your support for two amendments that will save college access programs targeted for elimination in the fiscal 2007 budget proposal as drafted by the Senate Budget Committee and proposed by the Administration.

Specifically we ask you to support the Harkin-Specter amendment, which would restore cuts to education programs by increasing funding for functions 500, 550, and 600 by \$7 billion.

In addition, we ask you to support the Kennedy-Collins-Menendez amendment, which would increase the Pell grant maximum award to \$4,500. The Pell grant has been far outpaced by inflation, diminishing the purchasing power of Pell and leaving hundreds of thousands of students without sufficient financial resources to attend college.

We believe that the United States needs an investment in education and college access now. Your support of these two amendments

is crucial to the education of our nation's youth.

Sincerely,

JOYCE SMITH,
Executive Director.

MARCH 14, 2006.

Hon. EDWARD KENNEDY,
*Member, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR KENNEDY: On behalf of the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium, we support the \$6.3 billion amendment being offered by Senators Kennedy, Menendez and Collins to restore funding to student aid programs, career technical education, and job training programs, as well as to increase the Pell Grant to \$4,500.

Specifically, NASDCTEC strongly supports the restoration of funding for the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act. The Perkins funds are essential in providing Americans the opportunity to gain the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in the workplace and postsecondary education. This funding will ensure that we have a highly skilled and educated workforce, ready to meet the demands of an everchanging global economy.

A cut or elimination to the Perkins program would force schools, training programs, and community colleges to eliminate critical programs that are working well in communities throughout the country. Supporting the Kennedy/Menendez/Collins amendment will make certain that students are provided with rigorous and relevant academics as well as ensure the efforts to build a skilled and competitive American workforce are achieved.

Thank you for your time, and I hope that you will consider supporting this amendment. We believe this amendment will help open doors of opportunity for students, workers and families. If NASDCTEC can be of any assistance to you during the appropriations debate, please do not hesitate to contact Nichole Jackson, Director of Government Relations.

Sincerely,

KIMBERLY A. GREEN,
Executive Director.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2006.

Hon. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. EDWARD M. KENNEDY,
*U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATORS MENENDEZ AND KENNEDY: On behalf of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the 1,158 community colleges it represents, I would like to express our strong support for your student aid and job training amendment to the FY 2007 Budget Resolution. This amendment increases the federal investment in programs that enable millions of Americans to pursue postsecondary education and training.

As a strong proponent of federal student aid, AACC supports a \$450 increase in the maximum Pell Grant. The centerpiece of federal student aid, the Pell Grant program is essential to providing access to higher education for low-income students. The program currently serves more than five million students annually, the vast majority of whom come from families with incomes below \$20,000 per year. Pell Grants enable approximately two million community college students to enroll each year by helping with tuition, books and equipment, and living expenses. However, the power of the Pell Grant

is declining, since the maximum award has remained frozen while student expenses have risen. A \$450 increase in the maximum Pell Grant would provide significant help to needy college students.

An increased federal investment in programs such as TRIO and GEAR UP that help prepare low-income, first-generation students for college is critical. Without additional resources thousands of middle school and high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds may never realize their postsecondary dreams. And with America's increasingly diverse population, this could have serious consequences for our economic future.

We also applaud your continued support for vocational education programs under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act. The Perkins Basic State Grant is essential for community college innovation in occupational education curricula. Funds support a wide range of activities, including integrating vocational and academic instruction; helping students meet challenging academic and vocational standards; training first responders; developing cutting edge curricula; and strengthening links between institutions and businesses.

Thank you for offering this critical amendment. We look forward to working with you as the FY 2007 budget process continues.

Sincerely,

GEORGE R. BOGGS,
President and CEO.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of amendment No. 3048 proposed by Senators SPECTER and HARKIN to restore funding for the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill to fiscal year 2005 levels.

This amendment would restore funding to many important programs, including one that is quite important to Arkansas as well as our Nation—the Geriatric Health Professions program. Title VII funding for geriatrics training is the only Federal program that specifically develops academic geriatricians at a time when more are needed. The fiscal year 2006 Labor-HHS bill eliminated several programs, including this program.

Geriatric health professions programs support geriatric education centers, faculty fellowships, and Academic Career Awards. The academic career award programs support the career development of geriatricians in junior faculty positions who are committed to teaching geriatrics in medical schools across the country. Geriatric Training programs train health professionals who plan to teach geriatric medicine, geriatric dentistry, or geriatric behavioral or mental health. Geriatric Education Centers train health professionals, faculty, students, and practitioners in diagnosis, treatment, disease prevention, disability, and other health problems of the aged.

In 2005, Geriatric Education Centers alone reported delivery of low-cost professional geriatric training interventions to over 50,000 health care providers who collectively reported over 8.6 million patient encounters and enhanced quality of care provided to older adults.

Since 2000, the Arkansas Geriatric Education Center has trained and educated 10,340 health professionals, most

of whom practice in rural areas, and has awarded over 54,000 hours of continuing education. The center had been funded through a grant from the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration.

Yet at the end of 2005 all funding for title VII geriatric health professions programs was eliminated from the 2006 Federal budget. The elimination of this program runs counter to recommendations from the 1,200 delegates to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging where enhancing the geriatric workforce ranked as 2 of the top 10 list of recommendations. Furthermore, it ignores the well documented shortage of geriatricians and specialized care needs of the older portion of the baby boomer population. Congress must renew its commitment to geriatric health professions training if the nation is to avert a crisis in access to geriatric care for older Americans.

The elimination of title VII funding for geriatric health professions training programs is a grave threat to the health of geriatric medicine. As the number of new physicians going into geriatrics declines and those already in the field approach retirement age, incentives rather than cuts are needed in programs that enhance the training of health professionals in geriatrics. Eliminating these funds will result in decreased access for the growing number of older patients in our country in need of the specialized care provided by geriatric healthcare professionals.

I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment which would restore funding to the geriatric health professions program, among other programs critical to the health of our Nation.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, during consideration of the Menendez amendment, No. 3054, I was unavoidably detained in a meeting off the Senate floor and missed the vote. As a cosponsor of the amendment to provide funding for port security, I would have voted "aye."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. I ask consent at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 16, 2006, all time under the act expire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INCREASING THE STATUTORY LIMIT ON THE PUBLIC DEBT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of H.J. Res. 47, the debt limit extension; provided further that the Senate immediately proceed to its consideration with 1 hour of general debate under the control of the chairman or his designee; 2 hours of general debate under the control of the ranking member or his designee; and the only amendment in order be the following: Baucus, study on foreign investment, 20 minutes equally divided.

I further ask consent that following the use or yielding back of time on the

bill and amendment, the resolution be set aside; provided further on Thursday, prior to the first votes on the budget, the Senate proceed to a vote in relation to the Baucus amendment, and following the disposition of the amendment, the joint resolution be read the third time and the Senate proceed to the vote on passage of the joint resolution, with no intervening action or debate.

I also ask all time consumed during this bill count against the time limit under the budget resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee is discharged from further consideration of H.J. Res. 47, which the clerk will now report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 47) increasing the statutory limit on the public debt.

Mr. GREGG. I ask unanimous consent the Senate resume consideration of the budget resolution at 9 a.m. tomorrow; provided further that the time from 9:30 to 10:30 be equally divided between the chairman and the ranking member; I further ask at 10:30 a.m. the Senate proceed to the votes in relationship to the following items: the Baucus amendment to the debt limit, the passage of the debt limit, the Conrad avian flu amendment, the Burr avian flu amendment.

I further ask consent that following these votes the Senate resume debate on the budget resolution until 1:30, with the time equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GREGG. The understanding here is that working with Senator CONRAD, we are going to line up a series of amendments which will be brought forward. We hope the Members will work with us. The time will be limited on these amendments for debate, but we will certainly try to accommodate the membership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, it is important for colleagues to know what we are doing. We are going to go to vote-arama starting at 1:30 tomorrow afternoon. Prior to that time, we are going to have some time for additional amendments until the votes at 10:30. As the chairman has indicated, at 10:30 we will have votes on the debt limit. We will then have votes on the avian flu amendments that were put off from this evening. After those votes are concluded, we will go back to amendments until 1:30.

Now, what does that mean? That means we have very restricted time tomorrow morning. We have very restricted time after the votes tomorrow, until 1:30 for additional amendments. The only way people are going to get time is if they take very short time agreements. That is the only alternative we have.

Again, I explain to my colleagues, I apologize, but the fact is, our time for

budget discussion has been dramatically reduced this year because of extraneous events. It is just a fact. The debt limit was put into this, the joint session, these series of meetings that are important bipartisan meetings at the White House. The chairman would agree that we have had probably the most difficult time managing this budget because there is so much less time available this year.

I ask for colleagues to understand if they want time they are going to have to take very short time agreements tomorrow; otherwise, they will be in a vote-arama.

Again, I thank my colleagues for the great cooperation so many have shown throughout the day.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, first of all, I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, we are now on the subject of raising the debt limit of our country by \$781 billion. This is after we have already had, during this administration, repeated increases in the debt limit over and over and over again—during the first 5 years of this administration, raising the debt limit \$3 trillion.

I have used this slide to make the point that I believe the debt is the threat. So much of the writing and so much of the commentary is about the deficit. But the deficit is going up much more slowly—even though it is at record levels—than the debt.

This year, they estimate the deficit will be \$371 billion, but the debt will increase by \$654 billion. When are we going to get serious about what is happening to our country? We are plunging deeper and deeper into debt, and increasingly, it is financed by foreigners.

I have to say, I have never been more concerned about the future fiscal strength of our Nation than I am today because we just seem to be in total denial. We seem to be so disconnected from reality. We keep on spending. We keep on cutting taxes. We keep running up the debt.

When the President came into office, here is what he told us. He said:

My budget pays down a record amount of national debt.

He said:

We will pay off \$2 trillion of debt over the next decade. That will be the largest debt reduction of any country, ever.

Then he went on to say something that I believe:

Future generations shouldn't be forced to pay back money that we have borrowed. We owe this kind of responsibility to our children and [our] grandchildren.

That is what the President said. He was going to have maximum paydown of the debt.

Well, that is not what happened. The President was wrong. Not only has there not been any paydown of debt, the debt has skyrocketed, as this chart shows.

The debt, at the end of the first year of this President's first term, was \$5.8 trillion. The debt, at the end of this year, is going to be \$8.6 trillion—\$8.6 trillion—at the end of this fiscal year. If we adopt the budget that is before us, we will pile on another more than \$3 trillion of debt over the next 5 years, winding up with a debt of \$11.8 trillion.

Now, here is what has happened already during this administration.

From 1998 to 2001, we added no debt. In fact, we were paying down debt. Those were the ending years of the Clinton administration's time.

In 2002, under the President's policies, we added \$450 billion to the debt limit. In 2003, we added \$984 billion to the debt limit. In 2004, we added \$800 billion to the debt limit. In 2006, now they are out here wanting to add another almost \$800 billion to the debt limit.

These are not just numbers on a page. These are not just bars on a graph. These are not just charts. These are debts of our country that have to be paid back.

What is perhaps most stunning is the degree to which this debt is being increasingly financed by foreigners—foreign central banks, foreign investors.

I use this chart to make the point. It shows the pictures of 42 Presidents. These 42 Presidents took 224 years to run up \$1 trillion of external debt—U.S. debt held by foreigners. This President has more than doubled that amount—much more than doubled that amount—in just 5 years.

The result of all this is we now owe Japan \$668 billion. We owe China \$260 billion. We owe the United Kingdom over \$240 billion. We owe the Caribbean banking centers almost \$100 billion. These numbers change from time to time because of money flows. South Korea, we owe over \$60 billion.

So what. What does it matter that foreigners now hold almost half of U.S. debt? What difference does it make if we owe Japan \$670 or \$680 billion? So what.

Well, the "so what" is, when you owe somebody money, you have a different relationship to them than when they owe you money. We have gone from being the biggest creditor nation in the world—more countries owing us more money than any other country in the world—to now being the biggest debtor nation. We owe more money than any other country in the world, and by a big amount.

I just had representatives of the American automobile industry come to see me. They said: We have to get tough on Japan because they are manipulating their currency for advantage in selling their automobiles.

I said: Do you have any idea how much money we owe the Japanese?

They said: No. We have no idea.

I said: Well, we owe them over \$660 billion.

How are we going to get tough with somebody we owe \$660 billion?

Earlier I had a group of business leaders come to me and tell me: We have to get tough with China because they are manipulating their currency for advantage in international markets. I asked them: How much do you think we owe the Chinese? They did not know. I told them we owe them over \$250 billion.

How are we going to get tough with China when we owe them all this money? What would we do if all of a sudden they did not show up to buy our debt because now every time we have an auction, most of it is going to foreign entities. That is how we are floating this boat. We are mortgaging the future. That is what we are doing. Does that make America stronger or does that make America weaker?

A number of weeks ago, the President had a small group of us over—Senators—to talk about energy. He reminded us that in his State of the Union Address he said America is addicted to oil. And he turned to me and said: That's pretty good for a guy from oil country to say that, don't you think?

And I said: Yes, I do, Mr. President. But I tell you, not only are we addicted to oil, we are also addicted to foreign capital. We are addicted to borrowing from countries all over the world.

This creates a vulnerability for our Nation because if these folks decide they are not going to keep lending us money, what would we have to do to attract the capital to finance these massive deficits, this massive debt? We would have to raise interest rates. That is what we would have to do, and perhaps precipitously. Then all these mortgages that are out here that are interest-only mortgages, all these mortgages that are adjustable rate mortgages, all these car loans, all these student loans, all these business loans, all these corporate financings—all of it—would go up, and go up sharply.

That is the great risk that is being run. It is a danger to our country. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board has said this is an unsustainable course. The Comptroller General of the United States has told us it is an unsustainable course. The head of the Congressional Budget Office has told us it is an unsustainable course. But we keep right on keeping on. There is no change. And sometimes you wonder: Does anybody care? Does anybody have the faintest notion of where this all heads?

Before us is a budget for the next 5 years, put before us by the President of the United States, and now passed by the Budget Committee in the Senate. Those who brought the budget before us say it is going to reduce the deficit. They show these red bars on this chart, and they say those red bars are getting smaller, the deficit is going down. Boy,

how I wish that were true. How I wish that were true. But it is not true.

This is what is really happening. They have left out things. They have left out war costs past 2007. They have understated the war cost in 2007 in addition to that. But the chairman, to his great credit, has added far beyond what the White House suggested in terms of war costs for 2007. He has made at least a serious effort to cover the war costs in 2007. There is no money past 2007.

There is no money past this year to fix the alternative minimum tax. Over the next 10 years, it costs a trillion dollars to fix. There is no money here past 2006. You put that back in, and then you put back into the calculation the money they are taking from the Social Security trust fund. Every year, they take from Social Security to pay other bills. It all has to be paid back. None of it is in the deficit calculation, but it all gets added to the debt.

When you add it all back, what you find is that when they say the deficit is going to go up \$359 billion for fiscal year 2007, starting October 1, the debt is going up \$680 billion; and the next year, the debt will go up \$656 billion; and the next year, \$635 billion; and the next year, \$622 billion. And in 2011, it is going to go up \$662 billion. And they are telling us everything is getting better? It is not getting better. It is getting a whole lot worse. That is the truth.

They have come tonight and asked us to raise the debt limit of this country another \$781 billion. Over the next 5 years, they want to run up the debt by another \$3.5 trillion. So at the end of that period, we have \$11.8 trillion in debt. That is before the baby boomers retire. People may not know the exact numbers, but the American people have a lot of common sense. You can kind of reality test. We can't pay our bills now. We are nowhere close to paying our bills. And we are borrowing money from countries all over the world. We are borrowing money from the Caribbean banking centers. Anybody listening to me doing their banking down in the Caribbean? We owe them almost \$100 billion.

I know we use so many numbers when we talk about a budget. A lot of people tune it out and say: I can't follow all the numbers. Just follow one number: The debt of our country has doubled. The debt of our country has doubled in this 10-year period. The first 5 years of the Bush administration and the next 5 where they are proposing the budgets, they are going to have doubled the debt of our country before the baby boomers retire. And almost half of this debt has been financed by foreigners. When we have a bond auction now, much more than half of it is being bought by foreigners. We are digging a hole that is so deep, it will take years to get out.

We just had this Dubai Ports deal. Everybody gets upset about the United Arab Emirates buying the terminals in six of our major ports. I thought it was

unwise. But that is the logical conclusion to this fiscal policy and this trade policy. Because while we are running up the debt on the budget side by \$600 billion a year and running trade deficits of more than \$700 billion a year and we are financing it by borrowing from abroad, guess what. Foreigners are up to their gills in dollars. They are loaded to the gills with dollars. And what are they going to do with them? They are going to buy American assets.

Look at what has already happened to our ports. The vast majority are owned by foreign interests now. You might as well just put up a big for-sale sign on America and say: Come and get it, because we have not been able to restrain our spending and our appetite for debt and our unwillingness to tax ourselves to pay our bills. So what is the result? The result is runaway debt, increasingly financed by foreigners, and at the same time these trade deficits, which have the exact same effect, putting more and more dollars in the hands of more and more foreign entities. They have to do something with them. They can sit on them. They can hold them in their banks. They can invest them in U.S. stocks and bonds, which they are increasingly doing. And they can also just buy hard assets here.

We wonder about the Dubai Ports deal. Get ready. There are going to be a whole lot more deals like that coming because the world is awash in dollars, and we are buying much more than we are selling to foreigners. At the same time in our own budget, we are spending much more than we are taking in. As a result, we have to borrow, borrow, borrow.

The Comptroller General of the United States is the man who is given the responsibility to advise the Congress on the fiscal condition of the country. Here is what he said before the Senate Budget Committee:

Continuing on this unsustainable fiscal path will gradually erode, if not suddenly damage, our economy, our standard of living, and ultimately our national security.

It is that simple. It is that important.

Tonight we are going to make another fateful decision. Unfortunately, there is no alternative. We are going to have to pass this increase in the debt limit because the money has to be paid back. We have already borrowed it. We have already spent it. It is gone. Now the only question is, Are we going to pay the bill? There is no option. There is no alternative. If the United States failed to pay its debt, the value of our currency would plummet, interest rates would skyrocket, and our economy would tank. That is the hard fact.

This should be a wake-up call for every Member of the Senate, every Member of Congress, and a wake-up call for the President of the United States. The question is, Are we staying on this course to keep running up the debt, debt on top of debt, increasingly financed by foreigners, or are we going

to change course? I hope with every fiber in my being that we change course because if we fail to do so, we will weaken the country immeasurably. We will threaten not only our economic security but our national security.

I thank the Chair, yield the floor, and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Who yields time?

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, how much time does the Senator require?

Ms. STABENOW. No more than 10 minutes.

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan is recognized for 10 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished ranking member from North Dakota, who does such an outstanding job every single day, speaking about the real values and priorities of the American people. I commend him for his leadership.

I rise today to express grave concern about this historic increase that is before us in America's national debt. Today, we owe \$8,270,260,017,805.93, and counting, on the national debt. That is a long string of debt that isn't going to go away—over \$8.2 trillion. In fact, it continues to grow. Just last month, we paid \$21 billion in interest alone. Earlier today, I offered an amendment for \$5 billion to make sure that the radios in this country are connected, interoperable, so they can communicate in case of a terrorist attack or a national disaster or other emergency. This was turned down by the body as being too much.

Yet we spent \$21 billion last month in interest alone on the national debt. The legislation before us allows this administration to continue to rack up another \$800 billion on the Nation's credit card. That means we are allowing the debt to exceed \$8.9 trillion. That is unbelievable. That is trillion with a capital "T."

Tragically, 5 years ago, we were sitting on top of the largest surplus in the Nation's history. The year I came into the Senate as a member of the Budget Committee, we were debating what to do with the largest surplus in the Nation's history, \$5.6 trillion. At that time, the Senator from North Dakota suggested—and I supported it—a strategy that would divide that surplus into thirds: one-third for strategic tax cuts in order to grow the economy; one-third for investment in our people, education, health care, science, research, law enforcement, those kinds of things; and one-third to go to paying down the liability we know is coming with Social Security. We would not be debating that gap in Social Security funding

on down the road if we had in fact used that strategy. But that is not what happened.

Instead, all of that was put into a supply-side tax cut geared only to the wealthiest Americans, and leaving everybody else to pick up the tab. Deficits have spiraled out of control since that time.

The budget we are debating only makes the national debt worse. It increases another \$4 trillion in debt over the next 10 years. That is the budget resolution that is in front of us. That doesn't reflect our values. As Americans, we want our children and grandchildren to do better than we did. It is not about leaving them debt; it is about creating opportunity and about leaving them good jobs, and health care, and air they can breathe, and water they can drink, and a strong national security so they are safe.

Unfortunately, because of our soaring national debt, our children and grandchildren are going to have to pay our bills. I find that simply outrageous. In essence, we are going to max out on the Nation's credit card and then send the monthly bill to our children.

As most people know, this is a tough time for the people of Michigan. Anybody who has read the newspaper lately knows that companies such as Delphi and General Motors and Ford are struggling. Due to problems such as unfair trade practices, we are literally losing our manufacturing base in this country, coupled with the fact that we need to fundamentally change the way we fund health care in order to get health care costs off the back of business so they can be more competitive in a global economy.

Manufacturing has been the key to building a solid middle class and creating a way of life that is extraordinary for Americans. If we lose our manufacturing industries, such as automobiles, we are going to lose our middle class in this country and lose our way of life.

You might wonder what do unfair trade practices have to do with the increasing national debt. The answer is: A lot. That is because many foreign countries own our national debt. That means we have to borrow from other countries to pay our bills. And we are borrowing more and more from foreign countries in recent years.

Unfortunately, many of those countries that own our debt also refuse to follow the international trade rules. They cheat. They want to be a part of the international community, but they don't follow the rules. In fact, China and Japan own approximately half of all of our foreign debt. At the same time, they continue to take our patents and to manipulate their currencies so their products cost less, in violation of international law.

This hurts our manufacturing sector because it makes it easier for them to sell their products in America and tougher for American businesses to export our products to their countries.

For example, a \$20,000 car imported from Japan has an unfair subsidy of as much as \$7,000 over a U.S. automobile. At the same time, U.S. exports to China face a \$7,000 tax. This cost advantage directly subsidized over 1.7 million cars and trucks exported to the U.S. last year, as well as every component imported by Japanese manufacturers for use in their U.S. assembly plants.

China has been pegging its currency and is responsible for producing a \$12 billion market of counterfeit auto parts, which has cost us the equivalent of 200,000 jobs in America—many in Michigan.

We should be getting tough with China and Japan on these trade violations that are costing Americans their jobs and threatening our middle-class way of life in this country. They are illegal. We should insist that they stop. But our Government is weak-kneed because we have borrowed so much money from them. There is a connection between the budget deficit and our trade deficit, both of which are out of control.

When I look at what families in Michigan are having to go through, men and women who have worked hard all their lives and have paid into a pension, and they may not have it now, and their cost of health care is going up, or maybe they won't have it anymore and they may be losing their jobs, and their dreams for sending their kids to college are going away, the American dream that says you can buy a house and have a good home and dream big dreams, and maybe in Michigan you can buy a cottage up north and a snowmobile, and you make sure you can live a good life and care for your families—those dreams are going away for too many people. Part of the reason is because of unfair trade practices. We don't have a level playing field. We do not make sure other countries are following the rules. They are cheating and they are getting away with it.

When we look at what is happening, we see that China and Japan own half of our foreign debt. They are the same people who are not following the rules and are costing us jobs. There is a direct connection between what is happening here in terms of raising this debt limit and what is happening in my home State of Michigan in terms of jobs, and the fight we have right now to keep our way of life. There is a better way than what is before us now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Michigan, who is such an exceptionally valuable member of the Budget Committee. She has been one of the strongest voices on the question of what are the priorities of the budget. Also she is a very strong voice for fiscal responsibility, recognizing that if we want to spend money, we have to pay for it. The Senator from Michigan has been a great leader on

the Senate Budget Committee. I thank her so much for her contribution during the year, and again on the debate on the budget resolution this year.

While we are waiting for the chairman of the Finance Committee, who is being called off the floor momentarily, I want to remind colleagues of the circumstance we face tomorrow. If there are staffs listening or Members listening, we are still getting requests as though we had a lot of time left. We simply do not.

Tomorrow we are going to start at 9. We are going to be handling amendments that are in the queue until 10:30. At 10:30, we will start voting on amendments and we will vote on the debt matter and amendments to the debt resolution. When those have been dispensed with, we will then go back to the consideration of amendments until 1:30.

At 1:30, all time has been deemed to have been used up in the budget resolution debate. We will start a series of votes every 10 minutes. Right now, with the number of amendments pending, we now have 65 votes pending on this side alone. We know we can do 3 amendments an hour. If everybody sticks to their amendments, that is 22 hours of straight voting. That is just the amendments on our side. The other side has another 15 amendments. That is 80, so that is 27 hours of voting.

That is the situation we face. It is in the hands of the Members. Are people going to show restraint or are people going to insist on every amendment to be offered and voted on? I hope very much that we can convince colleagues to take very short time agreements tomorrow. I will not agree to any time agreement over 10 minutes tomorrow, period. Let me make that very clear. I hope we can get time agreements as short as 5 minutes before we get into vote-arama. When we get into vote-arama, understand that there will be 1 minute on a side.

So, again, I hope colleagues understand the circumstance we face. We have lost a tremendous amount of time to extraneous events—a joint session, meetings at the White House, and the debt limit debate put in the middle of this discussion. So that is the reality we face.

Last year, Lula Davis has just informed me, we started voting at 1:17 in the afternoon, and we voted until roughly 10 o'clock at night. Some of those votes were held every 5 minutes, and we handled over 20 amendments during that period. I think one can see if we have to try to do 80 amendments, we are going to be here a very long time.

With that, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Is the Senator from Oklahoma seeking recognition?

Mr. COBURN. I am.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEMINT). The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I don't want to be offensive in any way. I listened to two talks about where we are,

and I agree with where we are financially. But there are some facts that are left out of the story. There is no question that spending has increased. There is no question the debt is going up. But who is responsible for it? We can talk about it. First, we had a recession, and then 9/11 came, and there were rosy projections we all knew for certain weren't right. But to turn around and blame our debt on the President of the United States is not only in error, it is not factually correct, and it also tends to shun the responsibility we have as a body.

The President cannot sign any bill we don't pass. This President became President in early 2001, at which time the Republicans weren't in control of the Senate. There was a divided—in 2002, that is, and there was a divided control. But during all that period of time, the bills that went to the President were voted on by Congress; both the House and the Senate passed bills. I also note that those people who have been so earnestly talking about our debt limit, which I plan on attacking aggressively—there is some credibility there with the talk.

This last year they voted for over \$700 billion in new spending. So if, in fact, you want to control the spending and you don't want the debt limit to go up, you can't continue to vote for unlimited spending increases.

There is no question that we have increased revenues that are not what they probably could be if we ran the Government much more efficiently, but the very fact that we would have people who claim they are appalled at the debt limit and then every time we cast a vote for an increase of spending that is not paid for or not offset in another way adds directly to that debt limit.

The responsibility lies in the Congress for the spending. It is not the executive branch. As a matter of fact, we have sent multiple bills, and if you look at the votes on the multiple bills that have come through this body, they are not just a majority vote, they are a supermajority and many times unanimous. So to claim and lay that on the executive branch when, in fact, it is our responsibility belies the truth.

The facts that the Senator from North Dakota outlined are very accurate in terms of where we are. Here is one of the most important facts. The increase in debt per Americans since 2001 is over \$8,000. The increase in the annual earnings per American workers since 2001 is less than \$4,000. We are about to become the first generation of Americans to leave the next generation worse off. But as long as we are finger pointing and saying it is somebody else's problem, we are not going to solve the problem.

We had an opportunity this past year in which we slowed down the growth of Medicaid by \$4.8 billion a year and over a 5-year period. That total cumulative cost is \$38.8 billion. That is the savings for 5 years. But the earmarks alone

that this body passed last year were \$64 billion.

I am highly concerned about the debt limit, and it is doubtful that I will be voting to extend the debt limit, but I certainly am not going to stand here and let people claim that it is the executive branch's responsibility. It is not. It is ours, and we failed. We have failed our grandchildren, we have failed our children, we have failed the people who are paying taxes today in this country. We would rather get reelected by doling out earmarks and pork than solve the real long-term problems of our country, and we can see that very easily when we look at earmarks related to the size of the Federal Government.

There is a cause-and-effect relationship. As a matter of fact, tomorrow morning we are having a hearing on earmarks in the Federal Financial Management Subcommittee, the oversight Committee on Homeland Security. What you see is that in 1994, there were 4,000 earmarks and about \$4 billion. Last year, there were 15,877 earmarks, and the total spending by the Federal Government was over \$2.6 trillion. There is a correlation. It is that we don't want to do the hard work of making the hard decisions.

So when we have \$64 billion in earmarks in 1 year and we can't get the hard savings of \$4.8 billion in just slowing the growth of Medicaid from 8 percent to 7.9 percent, and we barely pass that, what we have is a refusal to do our duty.

The points the Senator from North Dakota made in terms of his financial analysis were all accurate. You can't dispute it. He points out very accurately the double standard on accounting gimmicks that the Congress is using.

It is my hope that tomorrow we will be able to discuss this more. I know the chairman of the Finance Committee would like to have the floor, and at this time I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

MR. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the issue of the increase in the debt limit has come before the Senate as an agreement between the two leaders, and as the committee of jurisdiction, as chairman of the Finance Committee, I speak in support of House Joint Resolution 47, a bill that increases the Federal debt limit. I support this increase because it is necessary to preserve the full faith and credit of the Government. Without an increase in the debt limit, our Government will face a choice that we should not make and we would not want to make: a choice between breaking the law by exceeding the statutory debt limit or breaking faith with the public by defaulting on our debt. I hope everyone would agree that neither choice is acceptable.

To understand why we are here today seeking to increase the debt limit, it is necessary to explain a few points about the Federal debt.

Under current law, there is a statutory limit on the amount of debt that can be issued by the Federal Government. This limit, which now stands at \$8.184 trillion, applies to virtually all the debt issued by the Government. There is only one debt limit, but there are, in fact, two types of debt within that figure: debt held by the public—meaning you and I as private citizens buying Government bonds, owning Treasury bills—and then, of course, on the other hand, the debt held by various Government trust funds. An example would be the surplus that is invested in the Social Security surplus payroll that is not being paid out for benefits, being invested in Government debt with that debt owed to the trust fund with the interest accumulating to the trust fund.

The amount of Federal debt held by the public is determined by the Government's annual cash flow. When total spending exceeds total taxes, the Government has a budget deficit. To finance this deficit, the Government borrows from the public by selling debt, such as Treasury bills, Treasury notes, and Treasury bonds. We will hear a lot of criticism that President Bush's tax cuts are responsible for our rising public debt, but the facts show otherwise.

When President Bush took office in 2001, the Federal debt limit was \$5.95 trillion, almost \$6 trillion. The debt limit was increased to \$6.4 trillion in 2002, \$7.3 trillion in 2003, and now the present \$8.1 trillion in 2005.

Assuming we increase the debt limit today, it will be \$8.965 trillion. Thus, the Federal debt limit will have increased by \$3.015 trillion since President Bush took office in 2001.

However, the tax cuts that have been enacted since 2001 total roughly \$900 billion through the end of the most recent fiscal year. That includes interest costs as well. Thus, the President's tax cuts account for about 30 percent of the increase in the Federal debt. The rest of this increase in the public debt is due to the recession, the war in Iraq, and the increased spending on homeland security, also related to the war on terror.

In addition to the debt held by the public, the Federal debt limit also applies, as I said before, to the debt held by various Government trust funds, such as Social Security and Medicare. Whenever a trust fund program collects more than it spends, the surplus is invested in special issue Treasury securities. These special securities count toward the debt limit. However, it is important to understand that the amount of debt held by the trust funds does not reflect the Government's unfunded obligations.

For example, the Treasury Department reports that the total amount of Federal debt held by all the trust fund programs is about \$3.5 trillion. However, the Social Security and Medicare trustees report that the unfunded obligation of Social Security and Medicare is more than \$81 trillion.

Given these facts, it should be obvious to everyone that the Federal debt provides a misleading and inaccurate picture of the Government's future liabilities. Efforts to use the statutory debt limit to control Government debt and deficits cannot succeed because it ignores the long-term budget problems.

Indeed, even former Federal Reserve Chairman Greenspan has suggested the debt limit has outlived its usefulness and should be replaced with a more accurate and useful alternative. I would welcome the opportunity to work with my colleagues to develop such an alternative. It may never happen, but it ought to happen. This is not quite a very intellectual way to decide what the Government is doing in a fiscal way because, quite obviously, every day Congress is appropriating money and every day we are spending money and every day if that exceeds the taxes that are coming in and we get to the debt limit, the debt is going to increase or is going to shut down the Government.

As a Republican, that was part of our strategy during the Clinton administration. But let me tell you, it didn't work. It didn't work because it wasn't good policy, and it ended up not being very good politics. I hope we do not have an extended debate and a lot of breast beating about the issue of increasing the national debt because, quite frankly, if we spend and we spend up to that limit, we are not going to shut down the Government, if we learned the lesson, as I hope I learned the lesson, and we move on. It ought to be very pro forma.

There will be a lot of debate about it, a lot of political points trying to be made, but the point is we have to keep the business of Government going. I would relish the opportunities to have those days when we paid down \$550 billion on the national debt during the fiscal years of, I think, 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000, I believe it was. It was about \$558 billion I believe that we paid down on the national debt. I am glad we did. But now we have the war on terror, we had 3,000 Americans killed in New York City because of terrorist attacks, and we are fighting a war to make sure terrorism doesn't happen again, at least on the soil in the United States of America.

The No. 1 obligation of our Government under the Constitution is for the national defense. Protecting our people from further terrorist attacks is very basic to it. We voted, in a bipartisan way, to send men and women to the battlefield in Afghanistan and Iraq, and if we do that, we have an obligation to appropriate the money to give them the tools to do the job when they put their life on the line for our freedom and our liberty and to make sure that 3,000 Americans don't get killed again. These all create situations wherein we have annual debt or annual deficits, and you increase the national debt on a cumulative basis when you do that. So there will probably be al-

most 50 votes, maybe, against this resolution when we vote on it tomorrow. I would ask the people who vote against it, do you want to shut down Government? Or if you don't want to shut down Government, you don't want to increase the national debt, why did you vote for the money we spent that brings us to the point of a necessity of increasing the national debt? We should pass this resolution for the sound operation of our Government. Shutting down Government, we found out, ended up costing the taxpayers more than if Government had operated.

There are a lot of conservatives listening who see a conservative like CHUCK GRASSLEY saying that, and they say: GRASSLEY, what planet did you come from? If we shut down Government, you ought to save money. But we didn't end up saving money. So you learn from history, or you are destined to repeat it. That is why this ought to pass unanimously. It won't, but it ought to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield 15 minutes to the Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Montana and commend him for his hard work on matters financial in the Senate and in our country. Fiscal responsibility is the watchword for the Senator from Montana, and I am grateful for his leadership. At the same time, I say to the distinguished Senator from Iowa, the chairman of the Finance Committee, he is someone who also works very hard to make us a responsible nation, and I respect him. Although we differ on things, the fact is that I listen carefully to what the Senator from Iowa has to say. He has a position of great responsibility, the chairman of one of the most important committees in the Senate, and carries that responsibility honorably; again, if I may say, at times wrongfully, but it is in the eyes of the beholder. But I know the Senator from Iowa understands that if there is any criticism of his views, it is not personal and has nothing to do with his credibility or his honor.

I listened very carefully to what the Senator from Iowa talked about. He talked about shutting down Government and he talked about providing security for our people, protecting them, making sure their lives continue in safety. But I don't get it. I have to tell you this: I don't get it. Because when issues came up such as when we needed more money for port security, we said no. When it came up that we needed more money for the Department of Homeland Security, we said: Well, we will give you some but not all you need. When it came to providing some developmental funds for technology that would help us examine containers coming into our ports, we were unwilling to do it.

So now what we hear is the lament that says: How can we shut down our

Government? Well, we can avoid shutting it down by not extending tax cuts to the wealthiest among us, people who make millions and don't need any help. I meet these people, and they say: Yes, we don't need it, but what the heck, if it is there, we are going to take it.

But when you think about the outcome of this profligate spending we are seeing here and our deficit going through the roof—I heard one of our good friends from the other side talk about reducing our annual deficits. Well, they could be reduced a trifling amount, but if you look at the debt, that debt increases, that clock is ticking.

We have here an example of a credit card, and our credit card is running kind of over the limit. Right now, we are carrying an \$8.2 trillion credit debt. That means if you borrow on credit, you have to pay it off. President Bush and his colleagues, the Republican Congress, are encouraging burdening our children and our grandchildren under a mountain of debt.

A lot of what we do around here is hidden in complicated budget rhetoric, but to put matters simply, this debt extension bill will increase President Bush's credit limit, the one he has established, by \$781 billion. It will encourage this Republican Congress—they are the majority—to charge another \$781 billion on our Nation's credit card.

Most Americans with credit cards know that you have to play by the credit card company's rules. People understand when they run up big bills they will be responsible to eventually pay up. Few people run up a giant credit card bill and then leave it for their children to pay. But that is what the Bush administration is doing, running up credit, and their kids will have to pay the bill.

Since President Bush took office, he has already increased the total Federal debt by 46 percent. He has added \$2.5 trillion to the debt future generations will have to pay. So I say enough is enough. The President and the majority in the Congress have been far too reckless for far too long with our Nation's credit card. We see who the managers are of the legislation we considering here: the Republican majority. And they want to extend his credit limit. I say no way.

In my view, it is time to limit the credit. It is what most parents would do. What would you do as a parent if you had a kid, a child who was running up bills on your credit card, just running them up, higher and higher and higher, and you know you can't pay them off? So what would you do? Pat him on the head and say: Go spend more? No, you wouldn't do that at all. What you would do is cut up his credit card. And this is what we are going to do: cut up his credit card right here and now.

America can do better, leave a better legacy for our grandchildren and their children. Our consciences scream out

just as a family would at home: We are buried in debt; why do you want to add more to it? The response would be: Mom and dad, why do you do this to us? We have college debt from our years at the university. We have less reliability, less reliance on pension funds. They are not guaranteed anymore. We have less expectation that we can hold our jobs based on foreign competition, jobs that used to be done here in Washington, DC, and in my home State of New Jersey and States across this country, jobs that were held, and they were good-paying jobs. Now they come with an accent from India. There is nothing wrong with the accent, but there is something wrong with the place. Why should we be transferring decent jobs Americans can do and do well to India? Why? Because we pay maybe a tenth of what it costs us here. If someone makes \$500 a week here, and in India they make 50 bucks, they will be feeling pretty good. So the result is that we are lowering living standards for Americans across this country, and these jobs will not be replaced.

I know something about balancing budgets. I ran a big company, a very large company; it now has 40,000 employees. We started with nothing. We worked hard. But we always balanced our budget. We had 42 years in a row with growth on the profit at 10 percent every year over the previous year, the longest record of any company in American history. That is the company I ran; it is called ADP, Automatic Data Processing. I was the founder.

Here in the Senate, I was the senior Democrat on the Budget Committee. We produced during those years the first balanced budget in 30 years. We did such a good job that when President Bush, President George W. Bush, took the oath of office, he was presented with the rosier financial picture of any President ever in the history of our country. We had budget surpluses as far as the eye could see. In 2000, we had a budget surplus—surplus—and that is in the year 2000, 5 years ago, going on 6 years ago, we had a budget surplus of \$236 billion. In 2001, when President Bush came into office, he had a surplus of \$128 billion. We were ready to pay off our national debt by the end of his term. We were in the middle of the longest economic expansion in the history of our country. But the Republicans plunged blindly and recklessly into massive tax breaks, not for the middle class or poor, lower level income among us, but the wealthy, the special interests—tax breaks that will cost \$3.4 trillion if they are extended over the next decade. A third of that amount, more than \$1 trillion, will go to the wealthiest of the wealthy, the top 1 percent.

This is what the Bush tax cuts will mean. If you make \$1 million a year, you get an average tax cut of \$136,000. That helps everybody out every year, I guess, if you need that. But if you make less than \$20,000 a year, you get 19 bucks—\$19 if you make \$20,000 a

year. Is that helping the people who are struggling with two jobs often, trying to balance their family obligations with their need to earn an income, having a babysitter intercede while dad comes home from work and mom doesn't yet go to hers? That is what is happening to a lot of people making \$20,000 a year with two children in this society of ours—a \$19 tax break. Don't spend it all in one place.

And to what end? The only thing President Bush and the Republican majority have accomplished is a doubling of our Nation's debt. If we continue on this path, our national debt will be \$12 trillion by 2011.

Tomorrow we are going to vote on whether President Bush should be able to charge up another \$781 billion on our credit card, the citizens' credit card, the national credit card. That is \$781 billion more of debt. I hear from people I talk to who work for a living with kids in college, they are worried about their personal debt they have to have to get along, so we want to make their job twice as tough by adding more of the national debt on their shoulders. Would a bank keep extending the line of credit for a customer who didn't have a plan to pay his bills? Of course not. That is why I say to my colleagues that we should say to the American people: We really do stand for fiscal responsibility, and we really do want to reduce our deficit, and we really do want to cut back on that debt so we can look our children and grandchildren squarely in the face and say: We didn't add to your woes, we added to your opportunities.

So I urge my colleagues to tell the people the truth out there. Don't cover it up with arcane language. Let us put a stop to this reckless credit binge. Let's make President Bush's credit card useless and put our country back on the road to fiscal responsibility.

I yield the floor.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, about 16 months ago, we debated an \$800 billion increase in the debt limit. At the time, this was the Bush administration's third request to increase the debt limit for a grand total of \$2.2 trillion. During this debate, I discussed how in less than four years, a 20-year \$5.6 trillion budget surplus was turned into a \$2.4 trillion deficit. I thought at the time the fiscal outlook could not get much worse and the budget situation would have to improve.

Unfortunately, I was wrong. Since the last debate on increasing the debt ceiling, the administration has not submitted budgets that would put us on a path towards deficit reduction. As part of last year's budget resolution, Congress passed legislation that would reduce spending by almost \$40 billion. Many of these cuts will impact those that have the least. Now Congress is in the process of wrapping up a \$70 billion tax bill. When you combine the spending and the tax bill, the numbers do not add up to put us on a path towards deficit reduction. The combined total

increases the deficit and increases the debt.

The Bush administration's budget for fiscal year 2007 includes more of the same and the fiscal situation even gets worse. The administration estimates that the deficit for 2006 will be \$423 billion, the largest in history. The projected surplus of \$5.6 trillion that this administration inherited will now turn into a \$3.3 trillion deficit, a reversal of \$8.9 trillion.

The repeated pattern of deficits and irresponsible budgets necessitate another increase in the debt limit. Today we have before us an increase of \$781 billion, which will bring the total to \$3 trillion under this administration's watch. If the President's budget is adopted, the debt is expected to reach \$8.6 trillion at the end of this year. Under this budget, with alternative minimum tax reform and ongoing war costs added in, the debt will explode to \$12 trillion by 2011.

We cannot continue on this unsustainable path. Yesterday, Senator CONRAD offered an amendment to the budget resolution to restore the original pay-as-you-go rule that led us on a path to a balanced budget, projected surpluses, and expectations of paying down the debt. These pay-go rules simply require new mandatory spending and new tax cuts to be offset. The current pay-go rule has a glaring loophole. Tax and spending increases that are provided in the budget resolution are exempted. This rule does not promote fiscal responsibility. A prime example of this is the tax and spending reconciliation instructions included in last year's budget resolution. These bills will increase the deficit by \$30 billion.

Repeatedly, efforts to restore pay-go have been defeated and these efforts were defeated once again yesterday. In the context of today's debate, I do not know how anyone could oppose an amendment to restore these rules. Without strong pay-go rules, we will be back here in a year debating another increase in the debt limit.

We have a fundamental obligation to restore fiscal responsibility rather than merely voting to raise the debt limit as if there was an endless credit card at the expense of the American people. Americans struggle every day to balance their own budgets. Across this country, I have heard how families struggle to keep up with the rising costs of health care, tuition, and gasoline. Median household income has declined by \$1,669 or 3.6 percent after inflation. Americans are sitting around their kitchen tables trying to figure out how to pay their bills. They do not have a magic credit card with no limit. Congress should play by the same rules.

We need to be responsible and think about future generations. We made tough choices during the 1990s in order to dig ourselves out of a hole, and now we are back in an even deeper hole. We need to face the consequences. The interest payments on the debt alone are

staggering and depriving of us choices that we need to make for the long term investment of our country. This debt will affect our children and grandchildren. Each individual's share of the public debt is over \$16,000 and a family of four's share is a staggering \$64,533.

The interest on the debt for this year alone is over \$220 billion and according to the administration's budget it will grow to \$322 billion in 2011. Just think of how this money could be put to better use. It could be used to help uninsured Americans with the rising cost of health care. We cannot afford expensive interest payments and ever-increasing debt with the retirement of the baby boomers on the horizon.

Not only is the amount of debt a problem, I am also concerned about the amount of debt that is foreign held, almost \$2.2 trillion. Japan holds the most, \$685 billion. China holds \$258 billion. Even the Caribbean banking centers hold \$111 billion. Over 51 percent of the public debt is held by foreign investors.

Sixty percent of the foreign debt is held by official foreign investors. It is dangerous for our Government and our standard of living to be dependent on foreign capital. If foreign investors decided to stop financing our borrowing habits, it could have a spiraling impact on our economy. If those investors began to withdraw their capital, our financial markets would plummet and interest rates would climb. This would filter down to American families. Homes, education, and cars would become more expensive.

Debt is more than a financial liability—it weakens our security, our diplomacy, and our trade policy. The negligence of our borrow and spend policies leaves us vulnerable to the priorities of foreign creditors. How do you go to a country that holds so much of your debt while your economy is closely linked to theirs and make an argument about nuclear proliferation, human rights, democratization, or other issues that are of importance and great consequence to our country?

We need to make economic opportunity and fiscal responsibility a common goal. We need to live by rules that give the debt limit meaning. I will not support a borrow and spend economic policy that has no limits. There are better alternatives.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I am deeply troubled by the pending legislation, which would raise the Federal debt limit by \$781 billion. The fact that we are considering this legislation illustrates how deeply the policies of this administration have plunged us into deficits and debt. This President has supported, and continues to support, tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, which are not paid for and which will continue to run up deficits and debt as far as the eye can see. I am very concerned that if the President continues to pursue this reckless fiscal policy, our Nation's long-term economic strength will be seriously compromised.

Despite the fact that the President signed into law legislation increasing the debt limit less than a year and a half ago, the Treasury Department has now informed us that it will need to borrow even more to keep the Government functioning. The legislation we are considering today would allow Federal debt to grow to \$8.965 trillion, truly a staggering sum.

When President Bush took office, he promised that his fiscal policies would include "maximum possible debt retirement." At that time, the Congressional Budget Office was projecting that our net debt to the public would decline to \$36 billion by 2008, when this President leaves office. Now, instead of achieving "maximum possible debt retirement," the President is asking for historically high debt increases. In fact, the CBO is now projecting that publicly held debt will rise to nearly \$5.5 trillion in 2008—almost 40 percent of our GDP. Gross Federal debt, which includes our commitments to Social Security and Medicare, will be \$9.6 trillion by the time this President leaves office.

You do not need a very long memory to recall that a few short years ago, under President Clinton, we made some very hard choices on taxes and spending—restraining spending and raising some taxes, primarily on upper-income people—and we were able to turn around the Nation's fiscal status and begin to pay down our debt.

When President Bush took office in 2001, the statutory debt limit stood at \$5.95 trillion and had not been raised since 1997. The administration is now asking for the fourth increase in the debt limit since this President took office. The limit was raised by \$450 billion in 2002, by \$984 billion in 2003, and by \$800 billion in 2004. Now the President is asking for an increase of \$781 billion—for a total increase of more than \$3 trillion since 2001.

These figures demonstrate how seriously our economic situation has deteriorated under this administration. Let me just emphasize that point with one further example. When the President took office, he inherited a 10-year surplus estimated at \$5.6 trillion. Now, when you factor in some of the costs we know are coming, such as the continuing costs of the war in Iraq and the cost of reforming the alternative minimum tax, plus the cost of some of the President's proposals, such as making his tax cuts permanent and continuing his defense buildup, the projections are for a \$3.5 trillion deficit over the next 10 years, a reversal of \$9.1 trillion. That is a seismic shift in our position.

Much of this shift is a direct result of the reckless fiscal policies pursued by the President during his first term and his singular focus on providing tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, even at a time of war. And the President is seeking to increase our debt burden by permanently extending many of these tax cuts, utterly ignoring the fact that these massive tax cuts for the rich

have led to budget deficits so large that they could jeopardize our future economic strength.

In part, my concern for our economic future stems from a change in international economic position of the United States. Two decades ago, the United States was a creditor nation internationally, by about 10 percent of our GDP. Now, because of the deterioration of our position over those intervening two decades, we are a debtor nation, to the tune of almost 25 percent of our GDP. At the end of fiscal year 2001, 31 percent of the outstanding Federal Government debt was held by foreign lenders. Over the succeeding 4 years, borrowing from abroad accounted for more than 80 percent of the increase in our Government debt.

The international financial position of the United States reminds me of Tennessee Williams's *Blanche DuBois* in "A Streetcar Named Desire," who said: "I have always depended on the kindness of strangers." That is what has happened to the United States in the international economic scene. We have deteriorated into a debtor status so that we are now dependent upon the kindness of strangers. That is not where the world's leading power should find itself.

This dramatic change in our economic situation comes at a time when the United States is facing a demographic tidal wave as the baby boom generation approaches retirement. When President Bush first took office, that retirement was almost a decade away. But time has run out. The first of the baby boomers will begin to retire in 2008, on this President's watch. Unfortunately, rather than prepare for the obligations we know are coming, this President has squandered every opportunity to save for the future.

Moreover, his policy of deficit-financed tax cuts makes us less able to make needed investments today. Every increase in the Government's debt means we are siphoning off resources that could be used for other purposes simply to pay the interest on that debt. Net interest payments on our debt are expected to consume more than \$1 trillion over the next 5 years. Instead of making investments in education, in health care, in transportation, we are paying billions of dollars in interest costs that would not have existed in the absence of the reckless fiscal policy of this administration.

Not only do these policies jeopardize our current and future economic strength, they place a tremendous burden on our children and grandchildren who will have to pay off this debt. By cutting taxes for the wealthiest, the President is really raising taxes on everyone, including our children and grandchildren, by leaving them with the responsibility for paying off this enormous debt.

It is unfortunate that this administration has demonstrated such a single-minded focus on cutting taxes, regardless of the very serious change in

our economic situation and our country's current and future needs. The fact that the President is calling for permanent tax cuts at the same time the Congress is being asked to add almost \$800 billion to the Federal debt ceiling is beyond reckless—it places in jeopardy our future economic strength and the economic security of all Americans.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield myself as much time as I consume.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote:

It is incumbent on every generation to pay its own debt as it goes.

That is what today's debate is about. Will this generation pay its own debt as it goes or will this generation choose to shift the burden of paying for our consumption to our children and our grandchildren? Will this generation take responsibility for its own appetites or will this generation rob from the mouths of our children and our grandchildren?

This question defines the very line between responsibility and irresponsibility.

Today we debate legislation to memorialize the shifting of that burden to our children. Today we debate raising the Government's borrowing by \$781 billion. That is more than three-quarters of a trillion dollars for 1 year. This follows on the heels of an increase of \$800 billion in November of 2004, less than 1½ years ago. That followed an increase of \$984 billion in May of 2003, less than 1½ years before that. That followed an increase of \$450 billion in June of 2002, less than a year before that.

This is the fourth time we have had to raise the debt ceiling in the 5 years of this administration. In contrast, prior to that the Government did not need to raise the debt ceiling for about 5 years. Moreover, as this chart shows, the cumulative increase during the 5 years of this administration has been a mammoth \$3 trillion. That is the definition of irresponsibility.

Look at this chart. In 2002 the debt limit increase is \$450 billion; 2003, \$984 billion; 2004, \$800 billion; 2006, \$781 billion. That totals over \$3 trillion; that is a \$3 trillion increase in just over the last 5 years.

Look back at our history. What about American history prior to 5 years ago? The debt of the United States did not hit \$3 trillion until 1990, a full 200 years after this country was founded. Now we have accumulated \$3 trillion in new debt in just 5 years. That is the definition of irresponsibility.

This debt increase will be the fourth largest debt increase in the history of our country. This chart shows the size of debt increases. As you can see from this chart, the record for a debt ceiling increase was \$984 billion. That was in 2003. We can see it on the chart. The second highest record was \$915 billion. That occurred in November of 1990.

That is this big spike. The third largest increase was in 2004 when we raised the debt ceiling by \$800 billion. That is not far from today's request, which is to increase it by \$781 billion.

During the time this administration has been in office—let's look at it from a little different perspective—the debt has gone up by about \$10,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. Consider that. During the time this administration has been in office, the national debt has gone up by \$10,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. For a family of four, that is an increase of \$40,000 over the last 4 years. That is more than most Americans pay for a car.

It is bad enough we have accumulated so much new debt during the 5 years of this administration, but there is a big difference between the debt increase during this period and the debt before. Before, most of the debt purchased from the U.S. Treasury was purchased by U.S. citizens and institutions.

Let me repeat that. Up to 4 years ago, most debt was purchased by Americans and American institutions. At least the interest we paid on that debt, therefore, was paid to Americans. The wealth stayed in our country. That was up until about 4 years ago.

It has changed. That is no longer the case. During the 1-year period—get this. You will be stunned by this next fact. During the 1-year period between December 2004 and December 2005, foreigners purchased 96 percent of the new debt held by the public. Almost all of the debt purchased in that 1-year period, December 2004 to December 2005, was purchased by foreigners, almost all of it; 96 percent of it in 1 year, the last year.

Foreign citizens, foreign banks, foreign central banks, and other foreign institutions bought this debt. Not Americans, foreigners. The amount of public debt held by foreigners has doubled during the time that this administration has been in office; that is, just last year almost all of it. But when you add it with the prior years, now it has doubled since this administration has been in office. The interest on that debt is being siphoned out of our country. The foreigners buy the debt and the interest on that debt. Where does it go? The interest goes to those who own the debt—not Americans, people overseas.

What is the consequence of that? That makes us less wealthy and it means the standard of living of our children and grandchildren will be lower than it ought to be. That is the definition of irresponsibility.

The problem is not confined to our future standard of living. The problem is also today. Some of the foreign holdings of debt are in the hands of foreign central banks. Japan holds two-thirds of a trillion dollars of U.S. debt. China holds over a quarter of a trillion dollars of U.S. debt. Undoubtedly, the governments of these two countries hold a

substantial portion of that debt. These large holdings of Treasury debts by foreign central banks are a risk to our homeland security and our economic security.

Does anybody ask why is that? Suppose the President of the United States thinks another country is jeopardizing American security. Suppose—it could happen—the President would like to tell that country that America would take action against it if it did not eliminate the threat to America. But if that country's central bank held a large amount of our Treasury debt, that country could threaten to sell it quickly. That sale would drive up U.S. interest rates and cause the dollar to fall. That could cause a recession in America. I am not saying a foreign central bank would do that off the top, but it would hint it might. It doesn't have to sell it all off, just a little bit. But that clearly shifts the power over to that central bank from the United States. As a result, the President might have to back down because of threats or insinuations, and so America would therefore be at a greater risk.

In the same vein, suppose the United States is involved in a trade dispute with a foreign country. It happens. If that foreign country's central bank held a lot of our debt, that country could threaten to sell that debt and force America to back down from its position on a trade dispute. America could be weaker in trade as a result. You could, obviously, apply that to almost any situation—not just trade or security but a whole host of areas where the United States has an interest with certain countries overseas.

At a recent Council on Foreign Relations event, Stephen Roach of Morgan Stanley put the risk in concrete terms. He said:

For a country that is more dependent on foreign capital than any country has ever been in the history of the world—for us to try to dictate the terms on which that capital is provided telling Dubai, for example, you know, "You can't buy our port facilities but keep on buying our Treasuries;" and you keep telling China basically the same thing, I really worry about the potentially dangerous path our elected leaders are taking us down.

The bottom line is simple. These massive increases in debt harm America. They are the very definition of irresponsibility.

How did we get to this point? The Federal budget deficits drive up our debt, and these deficits have been huge during this administration. When this administration took office we were running large budget surpluses. Do you remember those days, not too many years ago? A \$5.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years was the projection back before the year 2000.

In fiscal year 2000, the last year of the previous administration, we ran a surplus of \$236 billion just for that 1 year. We ran a surplus of \$86 billion even without counting Social Security. By fiscal year 2001, the surplus, counting Social Security, had dropped to

\$128 billion, down from \$236 billion in the prior year.

Then the tide of red ink began to flow. In fiscal year 2002 the Government ran a deficit of \$158 billion. The following year, fiscal 2003, the Government ran a budget deficit of \$375 billion. That was an all-time record just as recently as 2003. Think what happened a few years since. That record lasted just 1 year. The next fiscal year, 2004, the Government set a new record by running a deficit of \$413 billion. The following year, fiscal year 2005, the Government ran a deficit of \$319 billion. That was not a record, but it was still larger than the deficits run in any year before this administration took office.

In the current year, the deficit will go up again. The administration predicts the deficit will rise to \$423 billion. This will represent yet another all-time record.

The fiscal policy of this administration has been the most irresponsible in the Nation's history. This fiscal policy has generated huge budget deficits, and in turn these deficits have contributed to massive increases in Federal debt. We clearly need to change course.

Let us, therefore, return to the advice that Thomas Jefferson gave us. I repeat:

It is incumbent on every generation to pay its own debt as it goes.

Let us return to a fiscal policy that could be defined as responsible.

AMENDMENT NO. 3131

Mr. President, I am now going to speak a little bit on an amendment I am offering on which we will vote, I suppose, tomorrow. I send that amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Montana [Mr. BAUCUS] proposes an amendment numbered 3131.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a study of debt held by foreigners)

At the end of the joint resolution, insert the following:

“Sec. __ STUDY.—(a) The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and other appropriate agencies of the United States Government, shall conduct a study to examine the economic effects of the holding of United States' publicly-held debt by foreign governments, foreign central banks, other foreign institutions, and foreign individuals.

(b) The Secretary shall transmit that study to the Congress within 180 days of the date of enactment of this legislation.

(c) The study shall provide an analysis of: “(1) for each year from 1980 to the present, the amount and term of foreign-owned debt held by the public, broken down by foreign governments, foreign central banks, other foreign institutions, and foreign individuals,

and expressed in nominal terms and as a percentage of the total amount of publicly-held debt in each year;

“(2) the economic effects that the increased foreign ownership of United States' publicly-held debt has on

“(A) long-term interest rates in the United States,

“(B) global average interest rates,

“(C) the value of the United States dollar,

“(D) United States capital market liquidity,

“(E) the cost of private capital in the United States,

“(F) the generation of employment in the United States through foreign affiliates, and

“(G) the growth in real gross domestic product of the United States;

“(3) (A) for each year from 1980 to the present, the effect of foreign debt on the United States income account,

“(B) the predicted effect over the next 20 years, and

“(C) the effect of the deteriorating income account on the overall United States current account deficit;“(4) the ability of the Department of the Treasury to track purchases of publicly held debt in secondary and tertiary markets, or, if this ability does not exist, the implications of that inability for fiscal policy, monetary policy, and the predictability of capital markets;

“(5) the effect that foreign ownership of United States' publicly-held debt has or could have on United States trade policy;

“(6) whether the level of United States debt owned by China may adversely affect the ability of the United States to negotiate with China regarding currency manipulation by China;

“(7) the effect of the increase of foreign holdings of United States debt held by the public on national security; and

“(8) the implicit tax burden that results from foreign ownership of United States debt held by the public, defined as the per capita amount that a United States Federal income taxpayer would pay in annual Federal income taxes to fully service such foreign debt during each of fiscal years 2006 through 2010.”

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, this amendment is quite simple. It directs the Treasury Department to study and report on the increase of foreign holdings of U.S. debt and what the consequences of that debt are for America. We all know that debts can add up. We all know that paying just the minimum payment on a credit card balance leads to years of payments and a much larger total of payments in the end. Most American families know that.

As a result, we urge and sometimes require credit card companies and car companies to disclose to customers how long they will be paying those minimum payments. We require them to say how much the full balance will be when the consumer has paid off the loan. It is pretty basic stuff.

This amendment is a lot like that. This amendment asks the Treasury Department to spell out the implications of our debt to foreigners. This amendment asks the Treasury to investigate what the full cost will be in higher interest rates, in the value of a dollar, in lower economic growth, in lessened power to negotiate trade agreements, and in diminished national security. We should let taxpayers know—that is

our employers, the people we work for—how big the payment really is. This amendment will help get the answers.

The Treasury is authorized to issue debt totaling a little more than \$8 trillion. Last year's budget resolution generated an increase of \$781 billion more, and that has led to the joint resolution before us today. This will be the fourth largest debt limit increase in our Nation's history.

So the question needs to be asked: Who is loaning us this money? Some of it is internal, like borrowing from Social Security. Much of it is borrowed from American citizens and businesses. Now there is also an especially worrisome trend, a trend worrisome not only to me and my constituents in the State of Montana but also taxpayers across the country. That is the amount of U.S. Treasury bonds held by foreigners.

Five years ago, foreigners held about \$1.1 trillion. Today that number has doubled to \$2.2 trillion. Japan holds about two-thirds of a trillion dollars; China holds a quarter of a trillion dollars. So the questions that inevitably follow are, first, how long can we continue to borrow more money? Second, what are the implications to our foreign policy as foreigners increase their holdings of U.S. debt? And, third, what share of America's taxes are being used just to pay interest on debt?

These are some of the issues we should debate today. These are some of the issues addressed in my amendment.

Every business has limits on the amount it can borrow. Banks say to businesses: Sorry, this is your loan limit. Financial institutions limit the amount that any individual or family may borrow. Every credit card has a maximum balance.

As a business or a family increases its debt, lending institutions begin to monitor the situation. Creditors even increase the interest rate charged on the debt.

At some point, America will face this economic reality. We cannot continue to accelerate our borrowing and ignore the consequences of increasing foreign held debt.

As one conservative economist put it last year in the *National Review*: “Growing nervousness in the bond market may be signaling an end to the free lunch Americans have enjoyed for the last 3 years, in which time foreigners have essentially financed our budget deficit.”

Indeed, we cannot count on that free lunch forever.

So I am offering a simple amendment. It directs the Treasury Department to coordinate with appropriate Government agencies to study and report on the increase of foreign holdings of U.S. debt. The amendment asks Treasury to study any associated national security implications. The amendment also asks the Treasury Department to assess how this increase in foreign investment of our federal debt affects our trade policy.

Do we want to put ourselves in the potentially precarious position of engaging in diplomacy with our Nation's creditors? What happens if those foreign central banks and foreign investors suddenly started selling their holdings of U.S. securities? Interest rates could rise dramatically. A recession could result.

I bet that American manufacturers would like to know the answer to some of these questions. Next month, the Treasury Department is expected to rule on whether China is deliberately manipulating its currency in an effort to gain an unfair trade advantage. American businesses are awaiting this decision. But they would also like to know how any action on that decision might be affected by the level of our foreign debt.

Five years ago, foreigners held about \$1.1 trillion in U.S. debt. Today that number has doubled to \$2.2 trillion.

Last year, Federal debt held by the public increased by \$297 billion. And the amount of public Federal debt held by foreign investors increased by \$286 billion.

I have said it before and I will say it again: It is a riveting statistic. Foreign investors financed 96 percent of our Federal debt last year. Almost all of it last year was financed by foreigners—not by Americans but by foreigners.

We need to understand this change. This study will provide important information on this topic.

The answers to these questions will help us to evaluate foreign purchases of American assets. The data thus far is quite startling. According to a report from the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, in 1995, net foreign investment in America was about 1.2 percent of our economic output. In 2005, net foreign investment was roughly 6 percent of GDP. That's an increase of 400 percent in just 10 years.

And we have just learned that our current account deficit for 2005 was the largest ever: \$805 billion. As a percent of the economy, it was also a record, at 6.4 percent.

That type of increase reflects the attractiveness of our national economy to foreign investors. But I think that we need to better understand what this means for our economy and our national security.

Both sides of the Capitol, and many of our constituents, have spent a great deal of time over the last few weeks debating the effect of purchases or control of critical American infrastructure assets by foreign entities. It is time that we get all the facts out on the table. And this study will surely aid in this effort.

And this amendment asks Treasury to evaluate how the increase of foreign-held debt affects taxpayers. Last year, Americans paid about \$85 billion in interest payments on this foreign debt alone. This year, in 2006, that amount will likely increase to about \$100 billion. And it will increase again in 2007.

That is again the amount in interest payments on foreign debt alone, \$85 bil-

lion last year. This year, in 2006, that amount will likely increase to \$100 billion. And it will increase again next year in 2007.

Since we collect about \$2.5 billion a day from income taxes, this year taxpayers will be working and paying taxes for almost 2 months just to pay off those interest payments on foreign debt. Think of that. Let me say that again.

Since we collect about \$2.5 billion a day from income taxes, this year taxpayers will be working and paying taxes for almost 2 months just to pay off those interest payments on foreign debt. That is not paying off the principal. That is just paying the interest. Americans will pay 2 months of taxes to service the debt we owe to foreigners.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment. We simply ask for more information, more disclosure, and more transparency relating to our federal debt. As guardians of the Federal budget, we should not be afraid to confront the facts and deal with them accordingly.

Consumers should know the full cost of buying that car when they sign on the dotted line. Well, today, on behalf of the American taxpayer, the Senate is being asked to sign on the dotted line for the borrowing that the Government has done. The American people deserve full disclosure of the consequences.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, nearly 50 years ago I, like the rest of the world, was mesmerized by a small metal sphere, no bigger than a basketball, no heavier than I or most of us.

Hurting through space at the speed of sound—I don't think it was faster than that, it goes about 18,000 miles an hour—this steel ball was Sputnik, the world's first satellite to circle the earth—in 98 minutes flat. It was a technological feat of the Soviet Union. Nikita Krushchev, the Soviet leader, had been intent on proving the Soviet Union's scientific superiority. He proved it that day in October 1957.

News of Sputnik caught Americans off guard. We had been convinced of our own superiority, but here was undeniable evidence that others were leading the way. And of all people, it was the Soviet Union.

Now we could only follow. We had been lulled into a slumber by past successes and had awoken to a harsh reality.

Other shocking Soviet achievements followed. In 1959, Luna 2 became the first space probe to hit the moon. In

1961, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first person to orbit the Earth.

But it was Sputnik that ultimately galvanized our great Nation. We came together to rediscover ourselves as a nation of thinkers, inventors, and dreamers. The shock of Sputnik caused us to not lower our expectations, but to raise them. Sputnik caused us to not ask less of ourselves but to demand more.

Four years after Sputnik, President Kennedy summoned the spirit of America to banish the ghost of Sputnik. Content to follow no longer, he set the highest goal imaginable. He declared:

We choose to go to the moon. We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win. . . .

Eight years later, American astronauts Neil Armstrong, Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin and Michael Collins landed on the Moon. Armstrong became the first man to walk on the Moon.

America never looked back. To this day, America is peerless in space technology.

Today, America faces a challenge no less daunting than the Soviet-American space race. We face no rival state. We face no organized military menace.

Instead, we face a world more integrated, more interdependent, and more intensely competitive than ever in our history. We face an economy with fewer second chances. Smaller margins for error.

In this new world, it is our challenge to succeed, and to leave our children and grandchildren an economy that is better than the one we inherited from our parents; an economy not laden with debt but bursting with opportunity; an economy whose workers are increasingly productive, and whose finances are prudent; an economy that plants the seeds of innovation and education today, knowing that generations far in the future will harvest their bounty.

Our challenge is to create an economy in which universal health care coverage is its greatest asset, not its heaviest burden.

The records it sets will not be for trade and budget deficits, or interest paid to foreign lenders, but for prosperity, productivity and progress.

Its workers and companies will look to foreign shores with hope and ambition, not fear and trepidation.

It is an economy where the strong are just and the wealthy are generous. It is an economy where the weak are secure and the struggling are given a hand.

This challenge is far greater than that which America faced in 1957. To prevail, we must demand more creativity. We must summon more ambition. We must harness more resources.

Yet we do not have a Sputnik moment that captivates us and calls us to

action. No single moment crystallizes the urgency of action and the imperative of success. Today, we are still in August 1957—still complacent, still sure of our superiority.

What will be our “Sputnik moment?”

Will our Sputnik moment come when our trade deficits break unimaginable records, and our foreign debt exceeds that of any modern industrial economy?

No, that moment has already passed.

Will our Sputnik moment come after we neglect our basic research programs for three decades, while our competitors pour funds into research and development and lure our labs to their shores?

No, that moment has already passed.

Will our Sputnik moment come when 45 million Americans have no health insurance, while those who are so lucky must pay more to receive less?

No, that moment too has come to pass.

Perhaps our Sputnik moment will come when China becomes the world's largest economy. That may be just 10 or 20 years away.

Perhaps our Sputnik moment will come when our foreign debt reaches such levels that each year, 2 percent of our Nation's income will go to paying interest on these loans. That may be fewer than 5 years away.

Let us not wait for our generation's Sputnik. Let us awaken from our complacency before we are shaken from it.

We must not act out of fear. But we must not fear to act.

Most of all, we must act as a nation for the good of the entire Nation. As President Kennedy said of his vision 40 years ago: “In a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon . . . it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there . . .”

We must all work to improve our Nation's competitiveness, and I am working to do my part at every opportunity.

This week, I will introduce a number of amendments to the budget resolution that strengthen our economy at its very foundation and steel its every pillar.

These amendments will strengthen our ability to educate our children, so that they may enter the workforce filled with confidence and innovative ideas.

These amendments will foster innovative energy research that will make our children's world cleaner, safer, and more secure.

These amendments will restore our commitment to basic research and development, a commitment that has served us well in the past and will serve us well in the future.

These amendments will embrace technology to expand our access to quality healthcare, while making it more affordable, efficient, and accurate.

These amendments will help grow our nation's pool of savings, which can foster investment. Investment that makes our economy more productive and innovative.

Taken together, I hope that these amendments will create an economy that moves our Nation forward, and makes sure that no one is left behind.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting them. I think they are very important. I think they are critical and, frankly, I think if we don't pass these and similar amendments, we are passing on to our children and grandchildren an immense disservice.

I thank the Chair for listening.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I cannot help but make a few comments on the speech we just heard, noting the fact that over \$500 billion in new spending was offered, of which over half was voted for by the ranking member on the Committee on Finance last year—new spending unpaid for—and has the audacity to talk about the President getting us into this fix.

I mentioned earlier, this Senate and the House, the Congress, got us into this fix. The bills start in the House, they come to the Senate, and the irresponsible spending that has gone on has been a compilation of many factors. But most of it rests upon the Members of the Senate who refuse to make the hard choices in terms of spending.

I also note during last year's appropriations cycle, I offered amendments that were called sunshine amendments to make sure we knew what was in the bills we were voting on. I also note that the ranking member voted against those both times they were offered.

It is disingenuous to claim lack of responsibility. It is all of our responsibility. The Nation does not want to hear Congress pointing fingers. They want a solution to the problem. That solution comes through by restraining the discretionary accounts, rather than offering another \$200 billion or \$300 billion this year of new spending that is unpaid for. It also comes through working the hard issues of changing the entitlement programs of Medicare, Medicaid, and reforming Social Security, like the President of this body has led on in the past.

The record should be clear that actions speak much louder than words. The actions of the ranking member of the Committee on Finance do not match up to the words that were just spoken. The responsibility lies on all. All are guilty of not doing what is in the best long-term interests of this country. That is what has to change.

We can play the political games. We can point fingers. But the fact is, I take responsibility for that, and every other Member of that Senate who has been here since 2001 should, September 11, 2001, when the economy failed, went through the tank. Since then we have been trying to build back this economy.

Quite frankly, the economy is in the greatest shape it has ever been in, in

terms of growth, productivity, jobs. What we do need to address and will address in the future is changing health care overall so people can have access to affordable health care.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUS R. DOUGLASS INSTITUTE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, on March 15, West Virginia State University will dedicate its new research institute in honor of the commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, the legendary Mr. Gus R. Douglass. This is a wonderful and fitting tribute to a great West Virginian and outstanding public servant.

Commissioner Douglass has served now 10 terms in his position, the longest reigning agriculture commissioner in the history of West Virginia, and, indeed, in the entire Nation. During his tenure, he has always demonstrated a sincere commitment to the farmers and to the people of West Virginia. His long and admirable record includes his support of programs designed to maintain family farms and new farming technologies and efforts to preserve a way of life that has become all too uncommon in our country. His work on behalf of our State's farmers has helped to improve the lives of all West Virginians.

In his remarkable career, Commissioner Douglas has brought national recognition to West Virginia. He has served as the national president of Future Farmers of America, the first president of the national FFA Alumni Association, the president of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, and chairman of the Southern Regional Committee for Food and Agriculture, as well as numerous other positions.

Meanwhile, Gus and his lovely wife, Anna Lee, have maintained their own family farm at Grimm's Landing in Mason County, WV. Along with their four children, and their families, they have done their part to continue the tradition upon which this great Nation was founded.

The Gus R. Douglass Institute at West Virginia State University will be a lasting legacy to the outstanding and unwavering commitment of Commissioner Douglass to public service. I thank West Virginia State University for bestowing this honor upon him.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter which I wrote to

Commissioner Douglass congratulating him on this well deserved recognition be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2006.

Hon. GUS R. DOUGLASS,
Commissioner of Agriculture, State of West Virginia, Charleston, WV.

DEAR GUS: I am so pleased that West Virginia State University is dedicating a research institute in your honor. This is a wonderful tribute to a good friend, a great West Virginian, and an outstanding public servant. Congratulations!

In your ten terms as Commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, you have faithfully demonstrated that you are a true servant of the people, and have taken seriously your sincere commitment to the farmers of West Virginia. Your long and admirable record includes unwavering support for family farms, new farming technologies, and a way of life that has become all too uncommon in our country. These and your many other efforts have helped to improve the lives of all West Virginians.

In naming this new research facility the "Gus R. Douglass Institute," West Virginia State University has not only bestowed upon it respect and prestige, but also has ensured that your commitment to service will reap benefits for generations to come. This lasting legacy to your remarkable career is well deserved and well earned, and I join all those who have gathered today in extending my heartiest congratulations.

May the work and the research conducted in this facility be as outstanding and productive as you have been, Gus. If it is, it cannot be anything but an enormous success!

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT C. BYRD.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the first female chief executive from Africa addressed a joint session of Congress. In order to commemorate this historic event, I rise to recognize Women's History Month. March is a time to celebrate the women who have played a pivotal role in America's history. Women have always played a crucial role in building the great history of this country, and the women of my home State, Nevada, are no different.

One who comes to mind is Sarah Winnemucca, an influential native woman whom we honored last year by making her the second of Nevada's statues in Congress. Born to a Paiute chief's family around 1844, Sarah was unusually driven to bridge the gulf between Native Americans and Caucasian settlers. Dedicated to helping her people, Sarah used her talents as an English translator, public speaker, negotiator, and educator.

Women's History Month is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments and contributions of famous women like Sarah, but there are many untold stories of women just like her whose names we don't know and whose lives have made America a place

of strength, freedom, and hope. Their stories are echoed in the contributions that women across the country make every day, whether at home, in the community, in the workplace, or on the battlefield. More than just to paying them tribute, I am committed to honoring them by fighting for a more just, prosperous, and worthy nation.

For the women colleagues, business leaders, and entrepreneurs who make our economy run, America can do better to ensure fair pay and expand economic opportunity. They give their best, but even in 2006, women who work full time year round still earn only 76 cents for every \$1 their male counterparts earn. I pledge that we will continue fighting to end this unfair pay gap, to increase the minimum wage, and to create more opportunities for all our families.

Finally, I salute the more than 200,000 women who are serving in active duty in the military, helping to defend and protect our Nation. I pledge to them that Democrats will continue fighting to provide our troops and their families, Active Duty and Reserve, with all the resources they need to protect our freedom. And when they return home, we will ensure that all veterans have access to the health care they need and never have to choose between retirement and a disability check.

At the end of the day, these brave women are protecting America, including community, integrity, freedom, and justice, for everyone. These principles represent not just the foundation of our great Nation but also the same values that bind us as Americans. This month, let us recognize the women all across this country—the mothers, the daughters, the coworkers, and the soldiers—who make these cherished ideals an intrinsic and enduring part of the American dream.

SIMPLIFICATION THROUGH ADDITIONAL REPORTING TAX ACT

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, yesterday I introduced legislation, entitled the Simplification Through Additional Reporting Tax, START, Act of 2006, that will require brokerage houses and mutual fund companies to track and report cost basis information to their customers and the IRS. The legislation is cosponsored by Senators OBAMA, CARPER, KERRY, and LEVIN and is based upon a recommendation made by the National Taxpayer Advocate, the organization created as part of the 1998 IRS Restructuring and Reform Act whose explicit purpose is to make recommendations to Congress to simplify the tax code.

Over 130 million Americans are now struggling with the difficult job of filling out their taxes and 32 million taxpayers will likely have to report a capital gain or loss. For taxpayers all across the country that are angry and frustrated with the tax code, the START Act will hopefully provide

some measure of relief and, at the same time, help close what is called the "Tax Gap."

The Federal Government now fails to collect close to \$350 billion in taxes that are legally owed. This is called the tax gap, an amount that exceeds last year's \$318 billion deficit, or this year's projected deficit of \$336 billion. The National Taxpayer Advocate has observed that if we eliminated the tax gap, we could cut taxes for every American by \$2,000. This would only be true, of course, if we ran a surplus. Because we are running a deficit, and will likely be doing so for the foreseeable future, the tax gap is really a \$2,000 tax increase on our children and grandchildren, with interest building every year. This is a moral failure that needs to be addressed.

Unfortunately, while there has been a lot of discussion about this issue in the halls of Congress and within the administration, there has been little action. In the last two years, there have been six congressional hearings on this issue. The Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Mark Everson has said that this issue is a top priority and that over a period of time the government could collect between \$50 and \$100 billion of the tax gap "without changing the dynamic between the IRS and the [American] people." However, in their latest budget, the Bush Administration has introduced proposals that only attempt to close \$259 million of the tax gap in fiscal year 2007, or approximately one-tenth of 1 percent of the tax gap as measured in 2001. This is a failure of leadership. More can be done.

The legislation that I am introducing today does not eliminate the tax gap, but it does address a significant part of the problem. Specifically, the START Act of 2006 addresses the portion of the tax gap related to capital gains. This part of the tax gap results from the underreporting of capital income, and can include income related to the sale of stocks, bonds, real estate, and a myriad of other investments. According to the IRS, the revenue loss from the underreporting of capital income is \$11 billion annually. It is important to understand that this figure is based on 2001 data. Since 2001, the amount of revenue collected through capital gains taxes has increased by \$190 billion, from \$349 billion in 2001 to \$539 billion in 2005. If one makes the reasonable assumption that the misreporting percentage has stayed stable during this period, the \$11 billion problem in 2001 is now a whopping \$17 billion problem in 2005. Over 10 years, assuming no growth in capital gains realizations, this potentially represents \$170 billion in revenue that the Federal Government is failing to collect.

The START Act is intended to accomplish three goals: first, reduce the deficit by closing a portion of the tax gap; second, simplify the tax-filing process for the millions of Americans who pay capital gains taxes; and, third, make the tax code fairer.

The first goal of this legislation is to reduce the deficit. We not only have a moral responsibility to our children and grandchildren to begin seriously addressing our growing deficit and debt, we also need to do so to protect our vital trade and national security interests. The total public debt now stands at \$8.2 trillion, or \$27,728 for each man, woman, and child living in America. This week, the Senate will likely vote again to raise the public debt limit, this time to \$9 trillion. By 2011, the debt will have reached \$11.8 trillion. In the last three years alone, we will have increased the debt limit by \$3 trillion, a 40-percent increase from when President Bush took office in January 2001.

While we are mortgaging our country, it is important to ask to whom do we owe all of this money. Increasingly, the answer is foreigners, and this development represents an economic and security threat to our country. In December 2005, an estimated \$2.2 trillion of the publicly held debt was owned by foreign creditors, such as the Chinese and Japanese. It took 42 Presidents 224 years to run up a trillion dollars of debt held by foreigners. This President has more than doubled that amount in just five years. This has weakened our country. Why? Because when the value of the U.S. dollar plunges at the mere suggestion by a Japanese or Chinese central banker that they will sell their holdings in U.S. dollars, it signals that we no longer control our economic destiny. This level of dependency affects our ability to bargain from a position of strength on national security issues with foreign countries. It is worth remembering that there has never been a country that is militarily strong, but financially weak, yet that is the path that we are on today.

Vice President DICK CHENEY famously said that "deficits don't matter." Well, they do, as almost all economists will tell you. And the reason they matter is that when we borrow, we prevent both the private sector and the public sector from being able to invest in our country's and our children's future. Our children are now part of a global economy, and are competing against children in Japan, India, and China for the jobs of the future. If we fail to invest in their future because instead we are paying off our debts, we will become the first generation to leave a country that is worse off than the one that we inherited.

While the START Act of 2006 will not balance the budget, it does represent a step in the right direction. The impact of START has not yet been scored by the Joint Tax Committee, so the impact on the deficit is not known. Nevertheless, the capital gains tax gap is now \$17 billion per year. My proposal might not close the entire gap, but I expect that it will make a very meaningful down payment on the problem.

The second goal of my legislation is to simplify the tax-filing process and help American taxpayers spend less

time filling out their taxes. It is no secret that the Tax Code is overly complex. It now has over 17,000 pages and contains almost four times as many words as the Bible. The IRS now prints over 1,000 publications. Americans now spend 5.8 billion hours and \$194 billion every year to complete their tax forms. According to the National Taxpayers Union, the number of taxpayers using paid professionals has soared by approximately 60 percent since 1980 and by nearly 30 percent since 1990. Reflective of this complexity is the fact that one of the leading tax preparation firms, H+R Block, was in the news recently because it could not accurately do its own corporate tax return.

One of the most complex areas of the tax code is Schedule D, the form that taxpayers must fill out when they report their capital gains and losses. For the average taxpayer, simply filling out this one schedule adds 7 hours to the tax return filing process almost a full work day. And, for taxpayers using return preparers to complete this form, it can add significantly to their costs.

Computing a capital gain or loss would seem, on its face, easy enough. You need to know the original purchase price and the final sales amount. Taking the difference between the two should determine the amount of gain or loss. Taxpayers do have the final piece of the puzzle—the sale price, as brokerage houses and mutual funds now report this information, called "gross proceeds," to their customers and the IRS on Form 1099B. But what taxpayers are not told, and what is extremely difficult to calculate, is what is called the "adjusted cost basis" in their investment. This is a technical term for the original price of the investment, plus any necessary adjustments.

Taxpayers face enormous challenges in trying to determine the adjusted basis of the securities they have held for many years. The first challenge is simply a matter of recordkeeping. Brokers usually send an investor a certificate of ownership stating the original purchase price of the asset. But stocks or bonds or mutual funds can be held for long periods of time, and many taxpayers lose this information and thus are left without any record of what they paid for the investment. The second challenge is a more serious one and stems from the fact that a taxpayer's capital gain or loss is not always simply the difference between the purchase price and sale price. Taxpayers must often adjust the tax basis they have in their investments due to certain events that take place during their ownership of the security. For example, if a company's stock splits, the tax basis in that stock must be cut in half; alternatively, if there is a reverse stock split, the tax basis in that stock must be doubled. Consider, too, that if you reinvest capital gains or dividends in the same investment, you likewise have to adjust your basis. Determining the adjusted basis can be a very com-

plex undertaking and, under current law, sole responsibility for this calculation falls on the taxpayer.

The START Act would eliminate both of these challenges. By requiring brokerage houses and mutual funds to track and report taxpayer's adjusted basis information, countless hours or days of frustration would be eliminated for the 32 million taxpayers who pay capital gains taxes. More importantly, these taxpayers would have confidence that the amount that they are paying in capital gains taxes is the correct amount. Information returns of this sort will provide taxpayer's with accurate information about their investments that they simply can plug into their tax returns. No more trips into the attic to rifle through old boxes. No more having to sit down and try to calculate the impact of ten stock splits and reorganizations on your shares of IBM or AT+T stock.

In addition to reducing the deficit and making the tax-filing process simpler, the START Act will also make the tax code fairer. Presently, the tax code discriminates against middle-class Americans who earn the overwhelming majority of their income in the form of wages. The reason is that middle-class Americans cannot underpay their taxes because their employers submit wage information reports, called W-2 forms, to the IRS. If a factory worker in Indiana wants to underpay his taxes, the IRS will know about it since his employer sent the amount that he earned in wages to the IRS.

By contrast, taxpayers that rely on capital gains for their income, however, are accountable to only themselves. Under current law, the IRS lacks the ability to monitor the accuracy of taxpayer's calculations since initial purchases are not reported to the IRS. This provides dishonest taxpayers with an opportunity to inflate the tax basis they have in their investments, thereby underpaying their capital gains taxes. Taxpayers that have capital gains income are thus on the honor system to report accurately. While that may work for the Boy Scouts, it doesn't work when it comes to paying taxes. Now many capital gains taxpayers are honest, but some are not. And if the dishonest ones want to do some Enron accounting, there is virtually no way that the IRS can detect it.

The START Act addresses this inequity between wage and capital income earners by putting them on a level playing field. By requiring that adjusted cost basis information be reported to the IRS, every taxpayer that has a capital gain will be treated in the exact same way that every wage earner is treated. If we want everyone to play by the rules, then everyone should be held to the same level of accountability. Moreover, if we want Americans to believe that their tax system is fair, then we need to make sure that they believe that the person next door is actually paying their fair share in

taxes. Third party information returns that allow the IRS to determine if someone is paying their taxes accurately are critical to ensure taxpayers comply with the law and that everyone is paying their fair share in taxes. The IRS uses this type of information return for wages, dividends, and interest income, and in these areas, the amount of non-compliance is negligible. Why should we not hold capital gains income to the same standard?

To accomplish the three goals that I have discussed, my bill requires brokerage houses and mutual funds to track and report their customer's adjusted basis and provide this information to their customers and the IRS. The reporting requirement would only apply prospectively to securities acquired after the effective date. This would prevent companies from having to undertake costly and time-consuming efforts to determine basis information for assets that could be decades old.

The START Act applies to stocks, bonds, and mutual funds. For other types of securities, the bill grants authority to the Treasury Secretary to determine if the reporting requirement should apply more broadly. Financial instruments, such as derivatives, swaps, and options are not covered in the bill, but the Treasury Secretary may decide to include or exclude them when implementing the legislation.

The START Act candidly acknowledges that there will be cases where it will be difficult or impossible for companies to provide accurate basis information. In these cases, such as gifts, bequests, and specialized cases where unique basis adjustment rules come into play like wash sale rules, the legislation grants the Treasury Secretary the authority to require brokerage houses and mutual funds to provide other information that will allow the IRS to understand why basis information is not being provided. For example, in the case of a gift where the adjusted basis is unknown, a brokerage house could in lieu of supplying the adjusted basis figure, simply denote instead a "G" on the information return issued to the taxpayer and the IRS.

The START Act also provides authority to the Treasury Secretary to issue regulations that will facilitate the transfer of cost basis information when investors move assets from one brokerage house, or mutual fund, to another. A significant amount of basis information is currently lost when individuals move their financial accounts from firm to firm and the original purchase price information is not transferred to the new broker.

Finally, the START Act requires companies to begin tracking adjusted basis information during the 2008 tax year and taxpayers will receive their first reports by January 31, 2009. This will give companies close to 2 years, more than ample time, to put the processes and systems in place to comply with this new regulation. Moreover, it

will give impacted companies close to 3 years before they have to issue their first information report.

Any proposal that imposes a new reporting requirement will have its critics and I am sure this proposal will attract its fair share of attention from some in the securities industry that don't like this idea. I would simply ask these potential critics read the bill before they pass judgment on the idea. I have tried to take a balanced approach and have sought input from a wide-range of experts and affected parties. Specifically, I have tried to balance the need to improve tax compliance with the goal of not placing an undue burden on industry. Specifically, by making the legislation prospective and providing three years of lead time before the industry must issue their first information report, I believe this legislation will present minimal burdens for industry.

In drafting this legislation, I have shared this legislation widely with industry, government officials, academics, and other tax professionals in order to craft the best bill possible. I have received input from the Securities Industry Association of America, the Investment Company Institute, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the National Association of Enrolled Agents. I have also reached out to small brokerage firms and mutual funds in Indiana to hear their perspective. In addition, the Government Accountability Office, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Joint Tax Committee have been consulted for their expertise on this legislation. During these consultations, I have not heard any explicit criticism of the proposal, but have received many helpful suggestions on ways to make this legislation both balanced and fair to companies and taxpayers. However, I do expect that there could be some philosophical and technical issues that are raised with the bill, so I want to take a moment to highlight those and respond to them immediately.

First, this proposal does not raise capital gains tax rates. For those that are legally paying the right amount in capital gains taxes, they won't pay one penny more in taxes. This proposal only ensures that people pay what they legally owe. And, moreover, what is happening today is that our failure to collect the taxes that are legally owed is effectively imposing a tax increase on our children and grandchildren who will have to pick up the tab for our fiscal failure to merely enforce the laws on the books. For this reason, I would argue that if my bill is enacted it would represent a tax cut for our children and grandchildren who will pay higher taxes if this problem is not addressed.

Some may look at this proposal and dismiss it as antibusiness and just another government regulation. I am sure there were some that had similar concerns when it was first proposed that all U.S. employers should report wages

to the IRS. Now, however, we know that this reporting requirement is a cornerstone of ensuring tax compliance. Moreover, the reporting requirement does not elicit any protests from employers because they realize that without it, the U.S Treasury would lose billions in legally owed taxes. As I have said before, the honor system may work for the Boy Scouts, but it is not a great way to collect taxes. Finally, no business would be able to succeed if every year it failed to collect \$17 billion per year in sales. In fact, any responsible company would move heaven and earth to address such a problem. U.S. taxpayers deserve the same level of accountability.

Some brokerage houses or mutual funds may argue that companies cannot provide this information because, in some cases, the correct information doesn't exist. This argument does not square with the fact that there are plenty of examples of companies that already provide cost basis information to their clients. If Fidelity or Ameritrade or E*Trade can provide cost basis information to all of their clients, it clearly suggests that the information can be provided.

Some may argue that this proposal will be costly to implement, even if it is a prospective proposal, because they don't have the systems in place to track and report cost basis. I would invite them to go talk to companies that have already decided to offer basis-tracking for their clients, and ask them how much it cost to offer this service. I would also ask them to talk to the software vendors and companies that provide basis tracking services to brokerage house and mutual funds. What they will tell you is that the cost is reasonable. According to a leading company that provides basis tracking services to brokerage firms and mutual fund companies, it typically charges on an annual basis approximately \$1 per account. For a company with 10,000 accounts, that is a yearly charge of \$10,000, a small figure when you look at the revenues of a brokerage firm of this size.

Some may point out that there are some types of transactions or securities where a brokerage firm or mutual fund cannot reasonably be expected to provide accurate cost basis information. My bill candidly acknowledges this fact. In these cases, brokerage houses and mutual funds will simply be required to provide "other information" that will allow their customers and the IRS to understand why adjusted cost basis information could not be provided. This is already standard practice for many companies that provide cost basis information to their customers.

In conclusion, this should be an issue that honorable members from both sides of the aisle can agree needs to be addressed. Democrats and Republicans will fight endlessly about what tax rates should be, but I believe all Members should agree on the principle that

all taxpayers should pay what you owe. We should also all agree that we need to reduce our deficit, simplify the tax-filing process, and promote a fair and equitable tax system. The START Act of 2006 is intended to make progress on all of these goals. I hope it can start a civil conversation about ways to improve our tax system. I look forward to working with all interested parties to craft a workable proposal that provides some needed relief to our overburdened taxpayers.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I recognize the 185th anniversary of Greek independence, which will be celebrated on Saturday, March 25.

As the Greek philosopher Plato said "The beginning is the most important part of the work." After centuries of unsuccessful uprisings and failure of the Ottoman Empire to assimilate and convert the Greeks, the War of Independence began on this day, March 25 in 1821. This was the beginning of the end of 400 years of occupation and oppression by the Ottoman Turks. During the dark years of the Ottoman occupation, thousands were killed and tortured for participating in religious activities or teaching their children culture, history, and language. The steadfast resolve displayed by the Greeks helped secure their independence and recognition as a sovereign power nearly 11 years later with the signing of the Treaty of Constantinople.

This struggle for Greek independence was recognized the world over and was supported abroad by prominent world figures including Lord Byron of England, and Daniel Webster and Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe of the United States.

As we fight today's Long War on Terror, the Greeks stand by our side. A highlight of the Greek military's continuing contributions to the International Coalition was the deployment of the 229th Mobile Field Surgical Hospital deployed to Afghanistan. At full operational status within 3 days, medical experts and officials believe the 229th is one of the best medical facilities that has ever operated in Afghanistan.

A Greek proverb says, "Success isn't how far you got, but the distance you traveled from where you started." Still alive and well in our own society today are the principles and ideas of ancient Greece. When we commemorate the heroism exhibited by the Greeks, we cannot help but to think of our Founding Fathers. Then and now, Greece and the United States share an absolute commitment to democracy, justice, and freedom. In history the Greeks have inspired, and in the present they have enlivened our great Nation. It gives me great pleasure and pride to cosponsor the Senate Resolution 399 designating March 25, 2006, as Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy. I send all Greek-Americans

in Rhode Island and around the country my best wishes as they celebrate their ancestral homeland's independence.

SUNSHINE WEEK 2006

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as we take stock during the second annual Sunshine Week, we confront the disturbing reality that the foundations of our open government are under direct assault from the first White House in modern times that is openly hostile to the public's right to know.

The right to know is a cornerstone of our democracy. Without it, citizens are kept in the dark about key policy decisions that directly affect their lives. Without open government, citizens cannot make informed choices at the ballot box. Without access to public documents and a vibrant free press, officials can make decisions in the shadows, often in collusion with special interests, escaping accountability for their actions. And once eroded, these rights are hard to win back.

The right to know is nourished by openness and vigorous congressional oversight of Federal agencies, but both are sorely lacking, and government effectiveness and accountability have been among the casualties. The disastrous failure to prepare for and respond to Hurricane Katrina is only the most recent example, but a glaring one. Despite misleading assertions in the storm's horrific aftermath, we now know that the White House was warned in advance that the levees could fail in a hurricane. We have belatedly seen videotapes in which President Bush was cautioned by FEMA officials of this great danger.

The Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, empowers the American people to pry information from their Government that agencies would prefer to keep locked away. Americans learned more about Abu Ghraib and conditions at Guantanamo from FOIA requests than from oversight by Congress.

As we celebrate FOIA's fourth decade as law, we also watch its erosion as a target of attacks such as when the administration pushed an overly broad FOIA waiver for the Department of Homeland Security's charter the single biggest rollback of FOIA in its 40-year history.

It has been nearly a decade since Congress has approved major reforms to the Freedom of Information Act. Last year during Sunshine Week, Senator CORNYN and I introduced bipartisan legislation, S.394, to curtail the assault on FOIA. The Open Government Act contains more than a dozen substantive provisions, designed to strengthen FOIA and close loopholes, to help FOIA requestors obtain timely responses to their requests, to ensure that agencies have strong incentives to act on FOIA requests, and to provide FOIA officials with all of the tools they need to make sure that our government remains open and accessible.

A second bill that I introduced with Senator CORNYN last year, the Faster FOIA Act, S.589, would specifically address the issue of agency delay in processing FOIA requests. We propose to establish a commission to review the persistent issue of delay and to make recommendations for reducing impediments to the efficient processing of requests. This bill was reported by the Judiciary Committee and awaits floor action.

Our free press and the consciences of whistleblowers also serve the public's right to know. We would not know of the domestic spying program conducted in secret by the National Security Agency, with the full approval of the White House, unless the press had revealed it last December. The Department of Justice is stonewalling Congress's efforts to obtain facts on this program while threatening to prosecute reporters who disclosed the illegal program to the public.

The Bush administration has kept vital facts secret by silencing scientists and experts. We saw it with the gagging of NASA scientist James Hansen, whose conclusions about the dangers of greenhouse gas emissions and global warming differed with administration policy. This administration also secretly let lobbyists from polluting industries write rules on mercury emissions, overriding the advice of the EPA's scientists and even drawing a harsh rebuke from EPA's inspector general. This tacit war on science—trumping scientific evidence with ideology—has also victimized women's access to the Plan B pill and cut international family planning funds which help the poorest of the poor, even though the evidence is clear that these funds reduce the numbers of abortions.

This kind of secrecy produces bad policies, as we saw when the Bush administration tried to hide the true cost of its Medicare prescription drug plan from Congress and the American people. While they were twisting congressional arms for votes on the program, political leaders at Medicare told Congress the price tag was \$400 billion. Medicare's own accountants projected the cost to be \$500 billion to \$600 billion, but one of those career staff, Richard Foster, was threatened with being fired if he told Congress the truth.

We saw it again when the political leadership of the Justice Department overruled career lawyers who found that Congressman TOM DELAY's Texas redistricting plan illegally diluted Black and Hispanic voting power. Career attorneys also found that a Georgia voter-identification law would discriminate against Black voters. The Department's political leaders dismissed these findings and quietly approved both plans. We only learned of these politically motivated decisions later when the press obtained documents and made them public.

In a situation that borders on the absurd, the intelligence agencies have

been quietly reclassifying documents that were open for years. This program began in 1999 but has exploded under this administration, which has reclassified more than 55,000 pages. Even the Archivist of the United States said he knew "precious little" of the program until it was revealed by the press.

The examples go on and on. The Bush administration has displayed a near-total disdain for the free press and the public's right to know.

Sunshine Week invites an inventory check on tools like the Freedom of Information Act that make real the public's right to know. Attacks on these tools only erode that right. A free, open, and accountable democracy is what our forefathers fought and died for, and it is the duty of each new generation to protect this vital heritage and inheritance.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY FOR KALOKO RESERVOIR VICTIMS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to express my sincere sympathy and deep concern for those affected by the collapse of the Kaloko Reservoir on the island of Kaua'i in Hawaii. This tragic flooding has caused loss of life and substantial property damage. The people of Hawaii have shown exceptional resolve in assisting their fellow citizens as emergency personnel and other volunteers have rushed to provide assistance to people in need. We continue to pray for those who are still missing and for those who are working tirelessly in search and rescue efforts and in additional emergency response.

As many of you know, several islands in my home State have been inundated by severe rainstorms over the past few weeks. Flooding has caused substantial disruptions of life as schools and business have been forced to close and many roads have been damaged or have been washed out because of high water. Property damage in cities and in rural areas has been severe.

Hawaii's Governor Lingle has called upon the National Guard and many State agencies to assist those who have suffered losses and to respond to immediate needs. However, the damage caused by this flooding demonstrates the need to prepare in advance for adverse conditions and to be vigilant in examining vulnerable areas.

I stand ready to offer any assistance to the State of Hawaii that I can, including securing emergency Federal funding for the State.

Throughout this adversity, the people of Hawaii have shown the resolve that they are known for in times of crisis. I am proud of my constituents as they help their neighbors and work to restore conditions around their homes, schools, businesses, and places of worship. I know that their efforts will bring comfort and solace to those in need.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT MAXCY

• Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of Robert Maxcy of Waldoboro, ME, who passed away this weekend at the age of 76. Bob served 56 years in the Waldoboro Fire Department, including the last 42 years as its chief, and I would like to recognize his lifelong devotion to public safety.

Chief Bob Maxcy was born on November 17, 1929, in Thomaston, ME, the son of the late Earl and Ruth Maxcy. At age 14 he began his service as a firefighter at the Thomaston Junior Fire Department. This was the beginning of his outstanding career in service to both Maine and the Nation.

Upon his graduation from Thomaston High School, Chief Maxcy served honorably with the U.S. Air Force from 1947 to 1950. During his service, Chief Maxcy attained the rank of gunnery sergeant.

When he returned to Maine in 1950, Chief Maxcy became a firefighter with the Waldoboro Fire Department. In that same year, he married his loving and devoted wife, Muriel. By 1964, Chief Maxcy had established himself as a leader in the department and was appointed chief of the Waldoboro Fire Department, a position in which he served for 42 years.

Beyond his dedication to his department, Chief Maxcy also was a leader in the community and the State, as evidenced through his participation in the Waldoboro Firemen's Association, Knox County Firemen's Association, Maine State Federation of Firefighters, and the Lincoln County Fire Chiefs.

Chief Maxcy was truly an honorable Maine man. In addition to his success as a community leader and firefighter, he will be remembered for his love of his family, the outdoors, and the Red Sox. Chief Maxcy is survived by five children, Deborah, Marcia, Marc, Dee, and Daryl; his brother, Harlan; his sister, Marilyn; his grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Chief Bob Maxcy will be greatly missed. I offer my sincere condolences and prayers to Chief Maxcy's family. •

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The following enrolled bills, previously signed by the Speaker of the House, were signed today, March 15, 2006, by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

H.R. 1053. An act to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to the products of Ukraine.

H.R. 1691. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Appleton, Wisconsin, as the "John H. Bradley Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic".

At 3:12 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 1184. An act to waive the passport fees for a relative of a deceased member of the Armed Forces proceeding abroad to visit the grave of such member or to attend a funeral or memorial service for such member.

S. 2064. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 122 South Bill Street in Francesville, Indiana, as the Malcolm Melville "Mac" Lawrence Post Office.

S. 2363. An act to extend the educational flexibility program under section 4 of the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4826. An act to extend through December 31, 2006, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits.

H.R. 4841. An act to amend the Ojito Wilderness Act to make a technical correction.

H.R. 4911. An act to temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 350. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

H. Con. Res. 354. Concurrent resolution expressing the continued support of Congress for requiring an institution of higher education to provide military recruiters with access to the institution's campus and students at least equal in quality and scope to that which is provided to any other employer in order to be eligible for the receipt of certain Federal funds.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4841. An act to amend the Ojito Wilderness Act to make a technical correction; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The following concurrent resolution was read the first and the second times

by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 354. Concurrent resolution expressing the continued support of Congress for requiring an institution of higher education to provide military recruiters with access to the institution's campus and students at least equal in quality and scope to that which is provided to any other employer in order to be eligible for the receipt of certain Federal funds; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-6018. A communication from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's Fiscal Year 2005 Performance and Accountability Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6019. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, the Agency's 2006-2010 Strategic and Operational Plan; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6020. A communication from the Chairman, United States Commission on Civil Rights, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6021. A communication from the Inspector General, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Audit Report Register, including all financial recommendations, for the period ending September 30, 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6022. A communication from the Director, Strategic Human Resources Policy Division, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Notification of Post-Employment Restrictions" (RIN3206-AK60) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-6023. A communication from the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a certification related to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6024. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, the semiannual report detailing payments made to Cuba as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6025. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report concerning the International Labour Conference; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6026. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 06-44-06-56); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-6027. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office

of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Triflurizole; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 7765-3) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6028. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Relaxation of Handling Regulation for Area No. 2" (Docket No. FV05-948-1 FRA) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6029. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Raisins Produced from Grapes Grown in California; Decreased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. FV06-989-1 IFR) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6030. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pears Grown in Oregon and Washington; Establishment of Continuing Assessment Rates and Modification of the Rules and Regulations" (Docket No. FV05-927-1 FR) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6031. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Milk in the Pacific Northwest and Arizona-Las Vegas Marketing Area—Final Order" (Docket Nos. DA-03-04B; AO-368-A32 and AO-271-A37) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-6032. A communication from the Acting Director, Directorate of Standards and Guidance, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Occupational Exposure to Hexavalent Chromium" (RIN1218-AB45) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-6033. A communication from the Political Personnel and Advisory Communication Management Specialist, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, (10) reports relative to vacancy announcements within the Department, received on March 13, 2005; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-6034. A communication from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Microbiology Devices; Reclassification of Hepatitis A Virus Serological Assays" (Docket No. 2003P-0564) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-6035. A communication from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Cardiovascular Devices; Classification of Implantable Intra-Aneurysm Pressure Measurement System" (Docket No. 2005N-0506) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-6036. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Fiscal Year

2005 Annual Report; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6037. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety and Health—Alternate I to Major Breach of Safety or Security Clause" (RIN2700-AD12) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6038. A communication from the Attorney Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a nomination for the position of Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6039. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Non-Community Development Quota Pollock with Trawl Gear in the Chinook Salmon Savings Areas of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (I.D. No. 021406B) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-6040. A communication from the Under Secretary and Director, United States Patent and Trademark Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Changes to Implement the Patent Search Fee Refund Provisions of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005" (RIN0651-AB79) received on March 13, 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. DOMENICI for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*David Longly Bernhardt, of Colorado, to be Solicitor of the Department of the Interior.

*Raymond L. Orbach, of California, to be Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy.

*Alexander A. Karsner, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy).

*Dennis R. Spurgeon, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy).

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. 2415. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase burial benefits for veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BURNS (for himself and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 2416. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the scope of programs

of education for which accelerated payments of educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill may be used, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2417. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to designate the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace home in Hope, Arkansas, as a National Historic Site and unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2418. A bill to preserve local radio broadcast emergency and other services and to require the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a rulemaking for that purpose; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 2419. A bill to ensure the proper remembrance of Vietnam veterans and the Vietnam War by providing a deadline for the designation of a visitor center for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. VITTER):

S. 2420. A bill to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to provide for payments for producing coastal States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2421. A bill to establish the Louisiana Hurricane and Flood Protection Council for the improvement of hurricane and flood protection in Louisiana; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2422. A bill to establish a Conservation and Habitat Restoration Fund and to require the Secretary of Commerce to provide grants to States for coastal zone management, coastal wetlands conservation, coastal land protection, and fisheries habitat restoration, and to improve understanding of coastal areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SANTORUM:

S. 2423. A bill to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ALLEN:

S. 2424. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the contribution limits for health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 2425. A bill to apply amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act related to providing medical services in underserved areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. REID:

S. Res. 402. A resolution designating the first day of April, 2006, as "National Asbestos Awareness Day"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 333

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG) was added as a cosponsor of S. 333, a bill to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its threatening behavior and to support a transition to democracy in Iran.

S. 1035

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1035, a bill to authorize the presentation of commemorative medals on behalf of Congress to Native Americans who served as Code Talkers during foreign conflicts in which the United States was involved during the 20th century in recognition of the service of those Native Americans to the United States.

S. 1086

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) were added as cosponsors of S. 1086, a bill to improve the national program to register and monitor individuals who commit crimes against children or sex offenses.

S. 1120

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1120, a bill to reduce hunger in the United States by half by 2010, and for other purposes.

S. 1848

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1848, a bill to promote remediation of inactive and abandoned mines, and for other purposes.

S. 2178

At the request of Mr. BURNS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2178, a bill to make the stealing and selling of telephone records a criminal offense.

S. 2197

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2197, a bill to improve the global competitiveness of the United States in science and energy technology, to strengthen basic research programs at the Department of Energy, and to provide support for mathematics and science education at all levels through the resources available through the Department of Energy, including at the National Laboratories.

S. 2198

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2198, a bill to ensure the United States successfully competes in the 21st century global economy.

S. 2199

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from California

(Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2199, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives to promote research and development, innovation, and continuing education.

S. 2232

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2232, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army to submit to Congress a report identifying activities for hurricane and flood protection in Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and for other purposes.

S. 2253

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2253, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to offer the 181 Area of the Gulf of Mexico for oil and gas leasing.

S. 2338

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2338, a bill to extend the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits.

S. 2370

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. GREGG), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2370, a bill to promote the development of democratic institutions in areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority, and for other purposes.

S. 2389

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2389, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit the unlawful acquisition and use of confidential customer proprietary network information, and for other purposes.

S. 2390

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2390, a bill to provide a national innovation initiative.

S. 2400

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2400, a bill to transfer authority to review certain mergers, acquisitions, and takeovers of United States entities by foreign entities to a designee established within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 2414

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.

2414, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require broker reporting of customer's basis in securities transactions, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 359

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 359, a resolution concerning the Government of Romania's ban on intercountry adoptions and the welfare of orphaned or abandoned children in Romania.

S. RES. 398

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 398, a resolution relating to the censure of George W. Bush.

AMENDMENT NO. 3001

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3001 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3004

At the request of Ms. SNOWE, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3004 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3004 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 3009

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3009 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3018

At the request of Mr. CHAMBLISS, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3018 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting

forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3030

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3030 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3031

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3031 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3035

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3035 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3043

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3043 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3045

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3045 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3048

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3048 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3050

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. TALENT) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3050 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3052

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3052 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3054

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. KOHL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3054 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3056

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3056 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3061

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3061 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3063

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Florida (Mr.

NELSON), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3063 proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3065

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3065 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

AMENDMENT NO. 3067

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3067 intended to be proposed to S. Con. Res. 83, an original concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. 2415. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase burial benefits for veterans; and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act.

We must honor our U.S. soldiers who died in the name of their country. These service men and women are America's true heroes and on this day we pay tribute to their courage and sacrifice. Some have given their lives for our country. All have given their time and dedication to ensure our country remains the land of the free and the home of the brave. We owe a special debt of gratitude to each and every one of them.

Our Nation has a sacred commitment to honor the promises made to soldiers when they signed up to serve our country. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I fight hard each year to make sure promises made to our service men and women are prom-

ises kept. These promises include access to quality, affordable health care and a proper burial for our veterans.

I am deeply concerned that burial benefits for the families of our wounded or disabled veterans have not kept up with inflation and rising funeral costs. We are losing over 1,000 World War II veterans each day, but Congress has failed to increase veterans' burial benefits to keep up with rising costs and inflation. While these benefits were never intended to cover the full costs of burial, they now pay for only a fraction of what they covered in 1973, when the Federal Government first started paying burial benefits for our veterans.

I want to thank my colleagues on the Veterans Affairs Committee for working with me in the 107th Congress. Together, we were able to increase modestly the service-connected benefit from \$1,500 to \$2,000, and the plot allowance from \$150 to \$300. While I believe these increases are a step in the right direction, they are not a substitute for the amounts included in my bill.

That is why I am again introducing the Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act. This bill will increase burial benefits to cover the same percentage of funeral costs as they did in 1973. It will also provide for these benefits to be increased annually to keep up with inflation.

In 1973, the service-connected benefit paid for 72 percent of veterans' funeral costs. Today, this benefit covers just 39 percent of funeral costs. My bill will increase the service-connected benefit from \$2,000 to \$3,713, bringing it back up to the original 72 percent level.

In 1973, the non-service connected benefit paid for 22 percent of funeral costs. It has not been increased since 1978, and today it covers just 6 percent of funeral costs. My bill will increase the non-service connected benefit from \$300 to \$1,135, bringing it back up to the original 22 percent level.

In 1973, the plot allowance paid for 13 percent of veterans' funeral costs. Yet it now covers just 3 percent of funeral costs. My bill will increase the plot allowance from \$300 to \$670, bringing it back up to the original 13 percent level.

Finally, the Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act will also ensure that these burial benefits are adjusted for inflation annually, so veterans will not have to fight this fight again.

This legislation is just one way to honor our Nation's service men and women. I want to thank the millions of veterans, Marylanders, and people across the Nation for their patriotism, devotion, and commitment to honoring the true meaning of Memorial Day. U.S. soldiers from every generation have shared in the duty of defending America and protecting our freedom. For these sacrifices, America is eternally grateful.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of this legislation be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2415

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Burial Benefits Improvement Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN BURIAL AND FUNERAL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS.

(a) INCREASE IN BURIAL AND FUNERAL EXPENSES AND PROVISION FOR ANNUAL COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) EXPENSES GENERALLY.—Section 2302(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking "\$300" and inserting "\$1,135 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)".

(2) EXPENSES FOR DEATHS IN DEPARTMENT FACILITIES.—Section 2303(a)(1)(A) of such title is amended by striking "\$300" and inserting "\$1,135 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)".

(3) EXPENSES FOR DEATHS FROM SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.—Section 2307 of such title is amended by striking "\$2,000," and inserting "\$3,712 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)".

(b) PLOT ALLOWANCE.—Section 2303(b) of such title is amended—

(1) by striking "\$300" the first place it appears and inserting "\$670 (as increased from time to time under section 2309 of this title)"; and

(2) by striking "\$300" the second place it appears and inserting "\$670 (as so increased)".

(c) ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 23 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 2309. Annual adjustment of amounts of burial benefits"

"With respect to any fiscal year, the Secretary shall provide a percentage increase (rounded to the nearest dollar) in the burial and funeral expenses under sections 2302(a), 2303(a), and 2307 of this title, and in the plot allowance under section 2303(b) of this title, equal to the percentage by which—

"(1) the Consumer Price Index (all items, United States city average) for the 12-month period ending on the June 30 preceding the beginning of the fiscal year for which the increase is made, exceeds

"(2) the Consumer Price Index for the 12-month period preceding the 12-month period described in paragraph (1)".

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"2309. Annual adjustment of amounts of burial benefits".

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendments made by this section shall apply to deaths occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) PROHIBITION ON COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007.—No adjustments shall be made under section 2309 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (c), for fiscal year 2007.

By Mr. BURNS (for himself and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 2416. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the scope of programs of education for which accelerated payments of educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill may be used, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Veterans' Employment and Training Act of 2006. I am joined in this effort by Senator PRYOR. This important legislation will provide expanded benefits for our brave men and women returning from service in the Global War on Terror, while also providing needed workers to growing sectors of our economy.

Under the Montgomery G.I. Bill, the Veterans' Administration currently provides accelerated benefits to assist our service men and women in transitioning to the civilian job market. Through this program, the VA makes short-term, high-cost training programs more attractive to veterans by paying benefits in a lump sum, and by covering up to 60 percent of the cost of some educational programs. However, this program is now only available to men and women who seek training in high-tech programs.

In order to provide this benefit to more of our brave men and women in the armed forces, the Veterans' Employment and Training Act will expand eligibility for accelerated benefits to include industry sectors identified by the Department of Labor as likely to add large numbers of new jobs or require new job training skills in the coming years. These sectors include construction, hospitality, financial services, energy, homeland security, health care, and transportation.

A number of these sectors face critical shortages of employees now or in the near future and are anxious to attract veterans to their professions. The trucking industry, for example, needs an additional 20,000 drivers today and expects to face a driver shortage of 110,000 drivers by 2014. The modest change that I am proposing today will help to provide needed workers to these and other industries.

But more importantly, we must remember the great sacrifices made by those in the Armed Forces. For many of these brave individuals, the transition from military service to civilian life is not an easy one. It is particularly difficult for veterans between the ages of 20 and 24, who currently have an unemployment rate of over 15 percent—nearly double the rate of non-veterans in the same age group. This is simply unacceptable!

We have an obligation to make sure that these individuals are not forgotten when they return from service. One step we can take now is to ensure that those who serve have access to every educational opportunity possible. By expanding eligibility for accelerated G.I. Bill benefits, we will give many of these veterans a new opportunity to get training and find work in some of the fastest growing sectors of our economy.

I urge the Senate to act soon to pass this legislation. We owe it to the men and women of the Armed Forces to act quickly to provide them with this expanded benefit.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2416

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Employment and Training Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. EXPANSION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS ELIGIBLE FOR ACCELERATED PAYMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THE MONTGOMERY GI BILL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b) of section 3014A of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph (1):

"(1) enrolled in either—

"(A) an approved program of education that leads to employment in a high technology occupation in a high technology industry (as determined pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary); or

"(B) an approved program of education lasting less than two years that leads to employment in a sector of the economy, as identified by the Department of Labor, that—

"(i) is projected to—

"(I) experience a substantial increase in the number of jobs; or

"(II) positively affect the growth of another sector of the economy; or

"(ii) consists of existing or emerging businesses that are being transformed by technology and innovation and require new skills for workers; and"

(b) CONFORMING EXPANSION OF PROGRAM OF EDUCATION.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (h); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (f) the following new subsection (g):

"(g) For purposes of this section, a program of education includes a program of education (as defined in section 3002(3) of this title) pursued at a tribally controlled college or university (as such term is defined in section 2 of the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801))."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) HEADING AMENDMENT.—The heading of such section is amended to read as follows:

"§3014A. Accelerated payment of basic educational assistance".

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 30 of such title is amended to read as follows:

"3014A. Accelerated payment of basic educational assistance."

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 2417. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to designate the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace home in Hope, Arkansas, as a National Historic Site and unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2417

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON BIRTHPLACE HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

(a) ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY; ESTABLISHMENT OF HISTORIC SITE.—Should the Secretary of the Interior acquire, by donation only from the Clinton Birthplace Foundation, Inc., fee simple, unencumbered title to the William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home site located at 117 South Hervey Street, Hope, Arkansas, 71801, and to any personal property related to that site, the Secretary shall designate the William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home site as a National Historic Site and unit of the National Park System, to be known as the "President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site".

(b) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.—The Secretary shall administer the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site in accordance with the laws generally applicable to national historic sites, including the Act entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", approved August 25, 1916 (16 U.S.C. 1–4), and the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the preservation of historic American sites, buildings, objects and antiquities of national significance, and for other purposes", approved August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.).

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2418. A bill to preserve local radio broadcast emergency and other services and to require the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a rulemaking for that purpose; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I stand before my colleagues today to announce the introduction of a bill that will preserve an important resource needed during times of an emergency—free, local, over-the-air radio broadcasting. The Local Emergency Radio Service Preservation Act ensures that terrestrial radio service does not suffer from the entry of subscription-based satellite services into local markets.

The most reliable form of communication today is radio. Oftentimes during natural disasters and other emergencies, many forms of communications become unavailable to the public. Wireless systems can be overloaded with calls. Satellite television service is interrupted by extreme weather conditions. Internet service connections are frequently disconnected. In contrast, over-the-air radio is an ubiquitous form of mass media that is available to nearly every car and household in the nation. The system cannot be overloaded and operates well under extreme weather conditions. Radio has been meeting the demands of local communities for nearly a century and is equipped to continue its service well into the next century.

In 1997 satellite digital audio radio service, SDARS, was licensed by the Federal Communications Commission, FCC, to provide a national radio programming service. Today satellite

radio companies provide their service to consumers on a subscription basis. The cost of the radio equipment needed to receive the service is reasonable for the enthusiast, but too costly for low income households. For many families, satellite radio is not an option. Instead, these people must rely on traditional over-the-air radio for weather, traffic, news and local information.

Should satellite companies begin to enter into local markets, going against the original spirit of the license agreement, local radio stations would suffer revenue loss. Advertising dollars are the radio broadcast industry's sole source of revenue. The technology exists for satellite companies to deliver local content, including local advertisements. Satellite industry players have publically stated that local advertising dollars could quickly become a new revenue source. This threat to free radio is a threat to the public interest.

The Local Emergency Radio Service Preservation Act eases the threat to radio broadcasting. First the bill prohibits the use of satellite terrestrial repeaters to insert local content into specific local markets. Second, this legislation clarifies that future technologies cannot be used to distribute local satellite programming. Lastly, the act requires the Federal Communications Commission, FCC, to conduct a rulemaking on the distribution of region-specific content on a nationwide basis.

By Mr. STEVENS (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 2419. A bill to ensure the proper remembrance of Vietnam veterans and the Vietnam War by providing a deadline for the designation of a visitor center for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I come to the floor to introduce a bill, which seeks to honor Congress' commitment to our Vietnam Veterans. Joining me in sponsoring this legislation is Senator HAGEL, a Vietnam veteran himself.

On November 5, 2003 this body passed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Visitor Center Act by unanimous consent.

That bill authorized the construction of a center to educate the nearly 4 million visitors annually to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

This center will be an important resource for current and future generations, enabling them to have a better understanding of the Vietnam War and to pay tribute to the brave Americans who answered the call to duty.

Unfortunately, the Visitor Center project has stalled due to bureaucratic delays.

This bill would create a 30-day deadline following its enactment for the approval of the Visitor Center.

We owe it to the Vietnam Veterans, and to the Wall's future visitors to follow through with this project. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

By Mr. ALLEN:

S. 2424. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the contribution limits for health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the growing success of Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and legislation I have introduced to expand Health Savings Accounts.

In a positive action, Congress created Health Savings Accounts as part of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA). Health Savings Accounts are an alternative to traditional health insurance—a savings product that offers a different and attractive way for consumers to pay for their health care. HSAs enable an individual to pay for current health expenses and save for future qualified medical and retiree health expenses on a tax-free basis.

An individual must have coverage under an HSA qualified health plan to open and contribute to an HSA. HSA qualified health plan premiums generally costs less than traditional health care coverage. Therefore, an individual can put the money he or she saves on insurance into a personal Health Savings Account.

I've always described myself as a common sense Jeffersonian conservative, which means I trust free people and free enterprise more than a meddling, burdensome government and that's why I'm such a strong advocate for Health Savings Accounts. Individuals own and control the money in their HSAs. Unlike a Flexible Spending Account, funds remain in the account from year to year, just like an IRA. There are no "use it or lose it" rules for HSAs. HSAs can become, over time, a strong, affordable health insurance product providing a savings "nest egg" for health care expenses.

In addition, HSAs allow individuals to make decisions on how to spend their money without relying on a third party. More specifically, the individual makes decisions about how much money he or she wants to put into the account, whether to save for future medical expenses, or pay expenses that health insurance plans may not cover.

The individual also decides what types of investments to make with the money in the account that will allow the account appreciate and grow in value. I want to make clear right here that the individual does not have to invest their money if he or she doesn't want to. This is only an option. The bottom line is that Health Savings Accounts give people the freedom to make the health care choices that best fit their needs and that best represent Mr. Jefferson's ideals and my own.

Now, there are critics of health savings accounts. However, there is convincing evidence that HSAs have proven effective in controlling health care costs and providing an affordable option for Americans without health insurance coverage.

Critics who claim that rich people gain most from the tax breaks of HSAs should look at the facts. Of the 3 million Americans who have enrolled in HSA plans, 32 percent were previously uninsured, and the uninsured are not typically wealthy. Critics suggest HSAs will drive up the cost of premiums. However, a recently released study from the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions showed HSA qualified plans had a 2.8 percent annual premium increase, compared to 8 percent for all other plans. This low rate of increase is another reason HSA qualified plans are affordable to those with lower incomes.

Another common criticism of HSAs is that the tax break benefits are "too generous." But the President's proposal offering both a tax deduction and tax credit for money used to fund HSAs is no more generous than current tax benefits for employer-sponsored health coverage. However, our laws and proposal only level the playing field.

Proponents of HSAs do not pretend that HSAs are going to "fix" the entire health care system, although they may go a long way toward doing so with more individual responsibility and opportunity. HSAs are an additional option—one that is affordable and chips away at part of the problem: the millions of uninsured Americans. Individuals need health insurance, especially for costly medical services, not only tax deductions for out-of-pocket spending. It is the combination of two products—the HSA and HSA-qualified health insurance plan—that has allowed over one million previously uninsured Americans to afford real health coverage.

I am very pleased to see the positive results of Health Savings Accounts. But we cannot let this momentum slow down. We must do more to promote HSAs and give individuals more control over their health care needs—and that is why I am here today. I am introducing legislation that would increase the maximum amount individuals can contribute to their HSA.

Under current law, an individual's contributions are limited to the lesser of the amount of the deductible or \$2700 for self-only coverage, (\$5450 for family coverage), for 2006. Under this proposal, a person could contribute—without paying income or payroll taxes on the contribution—up to the plan's out-of-pocket maximum, which is higher than the deductible. So for an individual, the maximum out-of-pocket for 2006 cannot exceed \$5250 or \$10500 for a family. It is important to note though, that each HSA qualified health plan sets their own limit on out of pocket expenses, therefore, for an individual their out-of-pocket expenses may be lower than maximum \$5250 but more than the current limit of \$2700. Nevertheless, this legislation allows individuals to save more money for their current and future health care needs and I am proud to be introducing it.

Moreover, this proposal will remove the tax bias against consumer-directed

health plans. Today, the tax code subsidizes health care purchased through insurance but generally does not subsidize health care paid out-of-pocket. This encourages excessive reliance on insurance for even predictable, non-catastrophic care, which in turn reduces consumer sensitivity to the cost of health care. My proposal would help improve the efficiency and slow the growth of our nation's health care spending.

Studies estimate that the average retiree will require hundreds of thousands of dollars of savings for out-of-pocket old-age health costs. HSAs provide strong tax incentives to encourage such savings. On a side note, I have introduced legislation, the Long-Term Care Act that compliments this HSA proposal. Under the Long-Term Care Act, we would allow individuals to use their 401(k) savings to pay for long-term care insurance. Both proposals provide commonsense approaches that will encourage individuals to plan for their future health care needs and reduce individuals' reliance on programs such as Medicaid.

HSAs have proven to be an effective health cost containment tool. While there is a cost to the federal government associated with the tax benefit portion of HSA plans, we must weigh that cost against the cost of doing nothing and allowing cost shifting to those with insurance. Our health care system needs to switch to a preventive care system, which will keep future health care costs down rather than our current costly reactionary system. If we continue down our current path and make no significant changes to our health care system, the unfunded liability of entitlement spending will reach \$26 trillion by the year 2030, consuming the entire federal budget. We're at a crucial point, and I believe my legislation, and HSAs in general, offer a step in the right direction for personal responsibility in fostering affordable health care and savings.

By Mr. CONRAD (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK):

S. 2425. A bill to apply amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act related to providing medical services in underserved areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CONRAD Mr. President: Today, I am introducing a bill to permanently reauthorize the Conrad 30 visa waiver program to provide medical care to underserved rural America.

One of the top concerns of North Dakota community leaders and hospital officials is the challenge of recruiting and keeping capable, quality doctors. In response, I created this visa waiver program in 1994 to recruit highly qualified foreign physicians to medically underserved areas.

This program was meant to help many areas across the country, especially rural communities that have a difficult time recruiting doctors, get

access to primary health care. It has proven to be one of our Nation's top tools to recruit and keep doctors in our rural communities.

The Conrad 30 program allows a State agency to grant visa waivers to foreign medical graduates who are in the United States for their residencies on foreign exchange J-1 visas. To qualify for the waiver, the physician undergoes numerous background and security checks, and must agree to serve a medically underserved community for three years. In exchange, the physician's requirement to return to his home country for a period of time before applying for a work visa is waived so that we can utilize them in underserved areas.

Since the program was implemented in 1994, North Dakota has received a total of 90 Conrad State 30 J-1 visa waiver doctors in communities all over the State.

Nearly every rural hospital in the State—and many of clinics—have benefited from the program. For example, Oakes, (population 1,979) has had 6 doctors, Bottineau, (population 2,336), has had 4, and Tioga, (population 1,125), has had 3.

As you can see, many rural counties rely on the physicians they receive through the Conrad State 30 program to provide healthcare in their communities. This bipartisan program is critical to ensuring our rural health care needs are met for years to come.

States have come to rely on the program. It has proven to be successful in bringing physicians to underserved areas without displacing American physicians, because the foreign physicians are filling a large and obvious void.

It has been just over 14 months since the last reauthorization passed, and we're already working on another reauthorization. Clearly, two years has proven to be far too short. Since 1994, the Conrad 30 program has been reauthorized a number of times. The current authorization expires on June 1, 2006. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill making the program permanent.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 402—DESIGNATING THE FIRST DAY OF APRIL, 2006, AS "NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS DAY"

Mr. REID submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 402

Whereas dangerous asbestos fibers are invisible and cannot be smelled or tasted;

Whereas the inhalation of airborne asbestos fibers can cause significant damage;

Whereas these fibers can cause mesothelioma, asbestosis, and other health problems;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases can take 10 to 50 years to present themselves;

Whereas the expected survival time for those diagnosed with mesothelioma is between 6 and 24 months;

Whereas generally little is known about late stage treatment and there is no cure for asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas early detection of asbestos-related diseases may give some patients increased treatment options and might improve their prognosis;

Whereas the United States has substantially reduced its consumption of asbestos yet continues to consume almost 7,000 metric tons of the fibrous mineral for use in certain products throughout the Nation;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases have killed thousands of people in the United States;

Whereas asbestos exposures continue and safety and prevention will reduce and has reduced significantly asbestos exposure and asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas asbestos has been a cause of occupational cancer;

Whereas thousands of workers in the United States face significant asbestos exposure;

Whereas thousands of Americans die from asbestos-related diseases every year;

Whereas a significant percentage of all asbestos-related disease victims were exposed to asbestos on naval ships and in shipyards;

Whereas asbestos was used in the construction of a significant number of office buildings and public facilities built before 1975; and

Whereas the establishment of a "National Asbestos Awareness Day" would raise public awareness about the prevalence of asbestos-related diseases and the dangers of asbestos exposure: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designate the first day of April 2006 as "National Asbestos Awareness Day".

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3068. Mr. KYL (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011.

SA 3069. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3070. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3071. Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3072. Mr. KERRY (for himself, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3073. Mr. GRASSLEY proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra.

SA 3074. Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. KOHL, Mr. BAYH, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3075. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the

concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3076. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3077. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3078. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3079. Mr. DEWINE (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3080. Mr. KERRY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3081. Mr. SALAZAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3082. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3083. Mr. DEWINE (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3084. Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3085. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3086. Mr. BYRD (for himself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. CARPER, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra.

SA 3087. Mr. DEMINT (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3088. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3089. Mr. SALAZAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3090. Mrs. CLINTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3091. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3092. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3093. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3094. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3095. Mr. BIDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the

concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3096. Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3097. Mr. DAYTON (for himself, Mr. DODD, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3098. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3099. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3100. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3101. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3102. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. BINGAMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3103. Mr. SARBANES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3104. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DODD, Mr. KERRY, and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3105. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3106. Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. KOHL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3107. Mr. BAUCUS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3108. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself and Mr. SANTORUM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3109. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3110. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3111. Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. DEWINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3112. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3113. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3114. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3115. Mr. REID (for Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. REID, and Mrs. MURRAY)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra.

SA 3116. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3117. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3118. Ms. STABENOW submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3119. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3120. Mr. SMITH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3121. Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself and Mr. SMITH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3122. Mr. TALENT (for himself, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. ALLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3123. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3124. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3125. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3126. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3127. Mr. HAGEL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3128. Mr. DOMENICI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3129. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3130. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3131. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) proposed an amendment to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 47, increasing the statutory limit on the public debt.

SA 3132. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3068. Mr. KYL (for himself and Mr. CORNYN) proposed an amendment

to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$2,000,000,000.

SA 3069. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$213,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$53,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$213,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$53,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$266,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$213,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$53,000,000.

On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by \$266,000,000.

On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by \$213,000,000.

On page 17, line 1, increase the amount by \$53,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$266,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$213,000,000.

SA 3070. Mrs. MURRAY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$24,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$24,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$24,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by \$24,000,000.

On page 17, line 1, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$24,000,000.

SA 3071. Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$180,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$4,860,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$840,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$120,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$180,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$4,860,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$840,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$120,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$90,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,430,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$420,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$60,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$90,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,430,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$420,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$60,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by \$90,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$2,520,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$2,940,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by \$90,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$2,520,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$2,940,000,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$90,000,000.

On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$2,430,000,000.

On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$420,000,000.

On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by \$60,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$3,000,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$90,000,000.

SA 3072. Mr. KERRY (for himself, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent res-

olution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$121,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$121,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$151,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$121,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 15, line 21, increase the amount by \$151,000,000.

On page 15, line 22, increase the amount by \$121,000,000.

On page 16, line 1, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$151,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$121,000,000.

SA 3073. Mr. GRASSLEY proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . RESERVE FUND FOR EXTENSION OF THE MEDICARE PART D ENROLLMENT PERIOD.

If the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that—

(1) authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to extend the initial open enrollment period under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act beyond May 15, 2006;

(2) provides funding to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Social Security Administration for the purpose of conducting enrollment activities for the period of any extension of the initial open enrollment period;

(3) waives the application of the late enrollment penalty for the period of any extension of the initial open enrollment period; and

(4) permits beneficiaries to change their enrollment election in such part D once during the initial open enrollment period, including throughout any extension of the initial open enrollment period; the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011 .

SA 3074. Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. KOHL, Mr. BAYH, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con.

Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$2,489,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$763,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$2,489,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$763,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$3,318,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$2,489,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$763,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by \$3,318,000,000.

On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$2,489,000,000.

On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by \$763,000,000.

On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$3,318,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$2,489,000,000.

SA 3075. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$56,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$116,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$96,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$56,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$116,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$96,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$334,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$56,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$116,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$96,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$34,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$26,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$334,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$56,000,000.

SA 3076. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$28,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$28,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$28,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.

SA 3077. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$81,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by \$18,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by \$27,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, decrease the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 18, line 2, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 18, line 15, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

SA 3078. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 43, between lines 22 and 23, insert the following:

SEC. 313. RESERVE FUND TO PREVENT CATASTROPHIC LOSS.

If—

(1) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that increases investment in measures designed to prevent catastrophic flood and hurricane damage in coastal areas such that—

(A) the measures, when completed, will likely decrease future expenditures from the Disaster Relief Fund;

(B) the increases do not exceed \$10,000,000,000; and

(C) the measures are certified by the President as likely to prevent loss of life and property; and

(2) that Committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a));

the Chairperson of the Committee on Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in the allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not

increase the deficit for the fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3079. Mr. DEWINE (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 20, increase the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, increase the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$77,000,000.

SA 3080. Mr. KERRY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, decrease the amount by \$3,272,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, decrease the amount by \$16,248,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$6,923,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$6,225,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,309,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, decrease the amount by \$3,272,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, decrease the amount by \$16,248,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$6,923,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$6,225,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$1,309,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, decrease the amount by \$3,272,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by \$16,248,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$6,923,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$6,225,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,309,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,272,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by \$19,520,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by \$12,597,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, increase the amount by \$6,372,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, increase the amount by \$5,063,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by \$3,272,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by \$19,520,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by \$12,597,000,000.

On page 7, line 4, increase the amount by \$6,372,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, increase the amount by \$5,063,000,000.

SA 3081. Mr. SALAZAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$152,000,000.

SA 3082. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$675,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$2,756,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$2,820,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$2,836,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,840,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$675,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$2,756,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$2,820,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$2,836,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,840,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$1,412,000,000.

On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by \$1,415,000,000.

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by \$1,423,000,000.

On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by \$1,433,000,000.

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,430,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$339,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$1,385,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$1,417,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$1,425,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$1,432,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$336,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,371,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$1,403,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$1,411,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,408,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by \$336,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,707,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$3,110,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$4,521,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$5,929,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by \$336,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$1,707,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$3,110,000,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$4,521,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$5,929,000,000.

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$1,412,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$339,000,000.

On page 19, line 3, increase the amount by \$1,415,000,000.

On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$1,385,000,000.

On page 19, line 7, increase the amount by \$1,423,000,000.

On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$1,417,000,000.

On page 19, line 11, increase the amount by \$1,433,000,000.

On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by \$1,425,000,000.

On page 19, line 15, increase the amount by \$1,430,000,000.

On page 19, line 16, increase the amount by \$1,432,000,000.

SA 3083. Mr. DEWINE (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by \$198,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by \$198,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$198,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$198,000,000.

SA 3084. Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY RESTRUCTURING.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) Social Security is the foundation of retirement income for most Americans;

(2) preserving and strengthening the long term viability of Social Security is a vital national priority and is essential for the retirement security of today's working Americans, current and future retirees, and their families;

(3) Social Security faces significant fiscal and demographic pressures;

(4) the nonpartisan Office of the Chief Actuary at the Social Security Administration reports that—

(A) the number of workers paying taxes to support each Social Security beneficiary has dropped from 16.5 in 1950 to 3.3 in 2005;

(B) within a generation there will be only 2 workers to support each retiree, which will substantially increase the financial burden on American workers;

(C) without structural reform, the Social Security system, beginning in 2017, will pay out more in benefits than it will collect in taxes;

(D) without structural reform, the Social Security trust fund will be exhausted in 2041, and Social Security tax revenue in 2041 will only cover 74 percent of promised benefits, and will decrease to 68 percent by 2079;

(E) without structural reform, future Congresses may have to raise payroll taxes nearly 50 percent over the next 75 years to pay full benefits on time, resulting in payroll tax rates of as much as 17.5 percent by 2041 and 19.1 percent by 2079;

(F) without structural reform, Social Security's total cash shortfall over the next 75 years is estimated to be more than \$25,000,000,000,000 in constant 2005 dollars or \$5,700,000,000,000 measured in present value terms; and

(G) absent structural reforms, spending on Social Security will increase from 4.3 percent of gross domestic product in 2005 to 6.4 percent in 2079; and

(5) the Congressional Budget Office, the Government Accountability Office, the Congressional Research Service, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and the President's Commission to Strengthen Social Security have all warned that failure to enact fiscally responsible Social Security reform quickly will result in 1 or more of the following:

(A) Higher tax rates.

(B) Lower Social Security benefit levels.

(C) Increased Federal debt or less spending on other federal programs.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the President, the Congress, and the American people including seniors, workers, women, minorities, and disabled persons should work together at the earliest opportunity to enact legislation to achieve a solvent and permanently sustainable Social Security system;

(2) Social Security reform—

(A) must protect current and near retirees from any changes to Social Security benefits;

(B) must reduce the pressure on future taxpayers and on other budgetary priorities;

(C) must provide benefit levels that adequately reflect individual contributions to the Social Security system; and

(D) must preserve and strengthen the safety net for vulnerable populations including the disabled and survivors; and

(3) the Senate should honor section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990.

SA 3085. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$153,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$122,400,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$15,300,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$15,300,000.

On page 10, line 20, decrease the amount by \$153,000,000.

On page 10, line 21, decrease the amount by \$122,400,000.

On page 10, line 25, decrease the amount by \$15,300,000.

On page 11, line 4, decrease the amount by \$15,300,000.

SA 3086. Mr. BYRD (for himself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. CARPER, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. SCHUMER) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 16, line 21, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 16, line 22, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$550,000,000.

SA 3087. Mr. DEMINT (for himself and Mr. CRAPO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . RESERVE FUND FOR SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM.

If the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment is offered thereto, or a conference report is submitted thereon, that provides changes to the Federal Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Benefits Program established under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.), by—

(1) requiring that the Federal Old Age and Survivors Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are used only to finance expenditures to provide retirement income of future beneficiaries of such program;

(2) ensuring that there is no change to current law scheduled benefits for individuals born before January 1, 1950;

(3) providing the option to voluntarily obtain legally binding ownership of at least some portion of each participant's benefits; and

(4) ensuring that the funds made available to finance such legislation do not exceed the amounts of the Chief Actuary of the Social

Security Administration's intermediate actuarial estimates of the Federal Old Age and Survivors Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund, as published in the most recent report of the Board of Trustees of such Trust Funds,

the chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3088. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$41,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$41,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.

On page 25, line 16, increase the amount by \$6,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$41,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

SA 3089. Mr. SALAZAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$100,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by \$100,000,000.

On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.

On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$100,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.

SA 3090. Mrs. CLINTON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$42,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$42,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$79,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$42,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by \$79,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by \$42,000,000.

On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.

On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$79,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

SA 3091. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.

SA 3092. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, decrease the amount by \$6,992,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, decrease the amount by \$36,366,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, decrease the amount by \$33,559,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, decrease the amount by \$6,992,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, decrease the amount by \$36,366,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, decrease the amount by \$33,559,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, decrease the amount by \$6,992,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by \$36,366,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by \$33,559,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by \$6,992,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by \$43,358,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by \$6,992,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by \$43,358,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

On page 7, line 4, increase the amount by \$76,917,000,000.

SA 3093. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S.

Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place insert the following:

SEC. . TO CONTROL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

“Beginning with fiscal year 2007 and thereafter, all non-defense, non-trust-fund, discretionary spending shall not exceed the previous fiscal year’s levels, for purposes of the congressional budget process (Section 302 et al of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974), without a 2/3 vote of Members duly chosen and sworn.”

SA 3094. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 4, line 15, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 4, line 17, decrease the amount by \$1,340,125,000.

On page 4, line 19, decrease the amount by \$1,403,250,000.

On page 4, line 21, decrease the amount by \$1,469,500,000.

On page 5, line 6, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 5, line 8, decrease the amount by \$1,340,125,000.

On page 5, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,403,250,000.

On page 5, line 12, decrease the amount by \$1,469,500,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by \$1,340,125,000.

On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by \$1,403,250,000.

On page 6, line 2, decrease the amount by \$1,469,500,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$2,619,750,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$4,023,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$5,492,500,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$2,619,750,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$4,023,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$5,492,500,000.

On page 21, line 3, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 4, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 7, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 8, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 11, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 12, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 15, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 16, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 27, line 3, decrease the amount by \$29,625,000.

On page 27, line 4, decrease the amount by \$29,625,000.

On page 27, line 7, decrease the amount by \$90,125,000.

On page 27, line 8, decrease the amount by \$90,125,000.

On page 27, line 11, decrease the amount by \$153,250,000.

On page 27, line 12, decrease the amount by \$153,250,000.

On page 27, line 15, decrease the amount by \$219,500,000.

On page 27, line 16, decrease the amount by \$219,500,000.

On page 29, strike lines 14 through 19, and insert the following:

(a) **SPENDING RECONCILIATION INSTRUCTIONS.**—In the Senate, by May 16, 2006, the committees named in this section shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the Senate. After receiving those recommendations, the Committee on the Budget shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill carrying out all such recommendations without any substantive revision.

(b) **COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.**—The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce budget authority and outlays by \$0 in fiscal year 2007, and \$3,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

(c) **COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.**—The Senate Committee on Finance shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce budget authority and outlays by \$0 in fiscal year 2007 and \$10,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3095. Mr. BIDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$434,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$732,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$582,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$539,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$422,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$434,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$732,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$582,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$539,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$422,000,000.

On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$434,000,000.

On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$732,000,000.

On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$582,000,000.

On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$539,000,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$422,000,000.

On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by \$434,000,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,166,000,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$1,748,000,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$2,287,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$2,709,000,000.

On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by \$434,000,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$1,166,000,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$1,748,000,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$2,287,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$2,709,000,000.

SA 3096. Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. —. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CRIME VICTIMS FUND.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—The Senate finds the following:—

(1) The Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (“VOCA”) was enacted to provide Federal financial support for services to victims of all types of crime, primarily through grants to state crime victim compensation and victim assistance programs.

(2) VOCA created the Crime Victims Fund (“the Fund”) as a separate account into which are deposited monies collected from persons convicted of Federal criminal offenses, including criminal fines, forfeitures and special assessments. There are no general taxpayer generated revenues deposited into the Fund.

(3) Each fiscal year, the Fund is used to support—

(A) formula grants to States for financial assistance to upwards of 4,400 programs providing direct victim assistance services to nearly 4,000,000 victims of all types of crimes annually, with priority for programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse, and previously underserved victims of violent crime;

(B) formula grants to States to supplement State crime victim compensation programs, which reimburse more than 150,000 violent crime victims annually for out-of-pocket expenses, including medical expenses, mental health counseling, lost wages, loss of support and funeral costs;

(C) the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve, to assist victims of domestic and international terrorism;

(D) discretionary grants by the Office for Victims of Crime to provide training and technical assistance and services to victims of Federal crimes;

(E) Children’s Justice Act grants to States to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases;

(F) victim witness coordinators in United States Attorney’s Offices; and

(G) victim assistance specialists in Federal Bureau of Investigation field offices.

(4) In the 108th Congress, a strong bipartisan, bicameral majority in Congress affirmed its support for the Crime Victims Fund and increased its commitment to crime victims in the Justice for All Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-405), which establishes Federal crime victims rights and authorized 2 new VOCA-funded victim programs.

(5) Before fiscal year 2000, all amounts deposited into the Crime Victims Fund in each fiscal year were made available for authorized programs in the subsequent fiscal year.

(6) Beginning in fiscal year 2000, Congress responded to large fluctuations of deposits into the Fund by delaying obligations from the Fund above certain amounts, as follows:

(A) For fiscal year 2000, \$500,000,000.

(B) For fiscal year 2001, \$537,500,000.

(C) For fiscal year 2002, \$550,000,000.

(D) For fiscal year 2003, \$600,000,000.

(E) For fiscal year 2004, \$625,000,000.

(F) For fiscal year 2005, \$625,000,000.

(G) For fiscal year 2006, \$625,000,000.

(7) In the conference report on an omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2000 (Public Law 106-113), Congress explained that the reason for delaying annual Fund obligations was “to protect against wide fluctuations in receipts into the Fund, and to ensure that a stable level of funding will remain available for these programs in future years”.

(8) VOCA mandates that “. . . all sums deposited in the Fund in any fiscal year that are not made available for obligation by Congress in the subsequent fiscal year shall remain in the Fund for obligation in future fiscal years, without fiscal year limitation”.

(9) The Crime Victims Fund is a trust fund established without tax payer dollars to assist crime victims and should continue to be respected.

(10) For fiscal year 2006, the President proposed to “rescind” \$1,267,000,000 from amounts in the Fund. Congress rejected this proposal in the Science, State, Justice, Commerce, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-108) and reaffirmed that amounts deposited or available in the Fund in any fiscal year in excess of \$625,000,000 shall remain in the Fund and not be available for obligation until the following fiscal year.

(11) For fiscal year 2007, the President is recommending “rescission” of \$1,255,000,000 from amounts in the Fund.

(12) The rescission proposed by the President would result in no funds being available to support crime victim services at the start of fiscal year 2008. Further, such rescission would make the Fund vulnerable to fluctuations in receipts into the Fund, and would not ensure that a stable level of funding will remain available for vital programs in future years.

(13) Retention of all amounts deposited into the Fund for the immediate and future use of crime victim services as authorized by VOCA is supported by many major criminal justice organizations, including—

(A) American Bar Association, Criminal Justice Section;

(B) National District Attorneys Association;

(C) National Sheriff’s Association;

(D) 56 Attorneys General;

(E) National Organization for Victim Assistance;

(F) National Network to End Domestic Violence;

(G) Mothers Against Drunk Driving;

(H) National Children’s Alliance;

(I) National Alliance to End Sexual Violence;

(J) National Coalition Against Domestic Violence;

(K) National Center for Victims of Crime;

(L) National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators;

(M) National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards;

(N) United States Conference of Catholic Bishops;

(O) National Grange;

(P) the Justice Project;

(Q) Victims’ Assistance Legal Organization, Inc;

(R) Justice Solutions, NPO;
(S) Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape;
and

(T) National Organization for Parents of Murdered Children.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the funding levels in this resolution assume that all amounts that have been and will be deposited into the Crime Victims Fund, including amounts deposited in fiscal year 2007 and thereafter, shall remain in the Fund for use as authorized under the Victims of Crime Act of 1984.

SA 3097. Mr. DAYTON (for himself, Mr. DODD, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$7,591,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$3,450,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$7,591,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$3,450,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$11,501,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$7,591,000,000.

On page 5, line 18, increase the amount by \$3,450,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$11,501,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$7,591,000,000.

On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,450,000,000.

On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.

SA 3098. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$34,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$26,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$334,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$56,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by \$116,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by \$96,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$30,00,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$34,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$26,000,000.

On page 25 line 4, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$334,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$56,000,000.

SA 3099. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 48, line 5, reduce the amount by \$2,914,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$2,914,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$2,577,000,000.

SA 3100. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 4, line 15, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 4, line 17, decrease the amount by \$1,340,125,000.

On page 4, line 19, decrease the amount by \$1,403,250,000.

On page 4, line 21, decrease the amount by \$1,469,500,000.

On page 5, line 6, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 5, line 8, decrease the amount by \$1,340,125,000.

On page 5, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,403,250,000.

On page 5, line 12, decrease the amount by \$1,469,500,000.

On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by \$1,340,125,000.

On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by \$1,403,250,000.

On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,469,500,000.

On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,279,625,000.

On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$2,619,750,000.

On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$4,023,000,000.

On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$5,492,500,000.

On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$1,279,750,000.

On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$2,619,750,000.

On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$4,023,000,000.

On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$5,492,500,000.

On page 21, line 3, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 4, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 7, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 8, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 11, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 12, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 15, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 21, line 16, decrease the amount by \$1,250,000,000.

On page 27, line 3, decrease the amount by \$29,625,000.

On page 27, line 4, decrease the amount by \$29,625,000.

On page 27, line 7, decrease the amount by \$90,125,000.

On page 27, line 8, decrease the amount by \$90,125,000.

On page 27, line 11, decrease the amount by \$153,250,000.

On page 27, line 12, decrease the amount by \$153,250,000.

On page 27, line 15, decrease the amount by \$219,500,000.

On page 27, line 16, decrease the amount by \$219,500,000.

On page 29, strike lines 14 through 19, and insert the following:

(a) SPENDING RECONCILIATION INSTRUCTIONS.—In the Senate, by May 16, 2006, the committees named in this section shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the Senate. After receiving those recommendations, the Committee on the Budget shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill carrying out all such recommendations without any substantive revision.

(b) COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.—The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce budget authority and outlays by \$0 in fiscal year 2007, and \$3,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

(c) COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.—The Senate Committee on Finance shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction sufficient to reduce budget authority and outlays by \$0 in fiscal year 2007 and \$10,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3101. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. HARKIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008

through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.
On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$1,100,000,000.
On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$1,200,000,000.
On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$1,400,000,000.
On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,500,000,000.
On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.
On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,100,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$1,200,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$1,400,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$1,500,000,000.
On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$500,000,000.
On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,100,000,000.
On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$1,200,000,000.
On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$1,400,000,000.
On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,500,000,000.
On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by \$500,000,000.
On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,600,000,000.
On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$2,800,000,000.
On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$4,200,000,000.
On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$5,700,000,000.
On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by \$500,000,000.
On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$1,600,000,000.
On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$2,800,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$4,200,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$5,700,000,000.

SA 3102. Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. BINGAMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$285,000,000.
On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$197,000,000.
On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.
On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$263,000,000.
On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$302,000,000.
On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$285,000,000.
On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$197,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$230,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$263,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$302,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$299,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$385,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$154,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$126,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
On page 5, line 19, decrease the amount by \$14,000,000.
On page 5, line 21, decrease the amount by \$188,000,000.
On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$76,000,000.
On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$137,000,000.
On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$287,000,000.
On page 6, line 8, increase the amount by \$14,000,000.
On page 6, line 10, increase the amount by \$202,000,000.
On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by \$126,000,000.
On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$11,000,000.
On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$298,000,000.
On page 6, line 22, increase the amount by \$14,000,000.
On page 6, line 24, increase the amount by \$202,000,000.
On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by \$126,000,000.
On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$11,000,000.
On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$298,000,000.
On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.
On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by \$13,000,000.
On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.
On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by \$4,000,000.
On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by \$1,000,000.
On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$120,000,000.
On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$29,000,000.
On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$33,000,000.
On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$27,000,000.
On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$18,000,000.
On page 18, line 15, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.
On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$120,000,000.
On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$17,000,000.
On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$90,000,000.
On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.
On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.
On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by \$540,000,000.
On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by \$187,000,000.
On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by \$203,000,000.
On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.
On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.
On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by \$125,000,000.
On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$46,000,000.
On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by \$25,000,000.

On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by \$18,000,000.
On page 22, line 12, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
On page 22, line 16, increase the amount by \$13,000,000.
On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$70,000,000.
On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$7,000,000.
On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$26,000,000.
On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.
On page 25, line 12, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$1,000,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$298,000,000.

SA 3103. Mr. SARBANES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$1,718,000,000.
On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$699,000,000.
On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$320,000,000.
On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$116,000,000.
On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$58,000,000.
On page 4, line 1, decrease the amount by \$1,718,000,000.
On page 4, line 2, decrease the amount by \$699,000,000.
On page 4, line 3, decrease the amount by \$320,000,000.
On page 4, line 4, decrease the amount by \$116,000,000.
On page 4, line 6, decrease the amount by \$58,000,000.
On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$2,912,000,000.
On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$1,718,000,000.
On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$699,000,000.
On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$320,000,000.
On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$116,000,000.
On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$58,000,000.
On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,912,000,000.
On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by \$1,718,000,000.
On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by \$699,000,000.
On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by \$320,000,000.
On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by \$116,000,000.
On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by \$58,000,000.
On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$2,912,000,000.
On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,718,000,000.

SA 3104. Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DODD, Mr. KERRY, and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the

congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$675,000,000.
 On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$2,756,000,000.
 On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$2,820,000,000.
 On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$2,836,000,000.
 On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,840,000,000.
 On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$675,000,000.
 On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$2,756,000,000.
 On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$2,820,000,000.
 On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$2,836,000,000.
 On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,840,000,000.
 On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$1,412,000,000.
 On page 4, line 15, increase the amount by \$1,415,000,000.
 On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by \$1,423,000,000.
 On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by \$1,433,000,000.
 On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,430,000,000.
 On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$339,000,000.
 On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$1,385,000,000.
 On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$1,417,000,000.
 On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$1,425,000,000.
 On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$1,432,000,000.
 On page 5, line 19, increase the amount by \$336,000,000.
 On page 5, line 21, increase the amount by \$1,371,000,000.
 On page 5, line 23, increase the amount by \$1,403,000,000.
 On page 5, line 25, increase the amount by \$1,411,000,000.
 On page 6, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,408,000,000.
 On page 6, line 8, decrease the amount by \$336,000,000.
 On page 6, line 10, decrease the amount by \$1,707,000,000.
 On page 6, line 12, decrease the amount by \$3,110,000,000.
 On page 6, line 14, decrease the amount by \$4,521,000,000.
 On page 6, line 16, decrease the amount by \$5,929,000,000.
 On page 6, line 22, decrease the amount by \$336,000,000.
 On page 6, line 24, decrease the amount by \$1,707,000,000.
 On page 7, line 2, decrease the amount by \$3,110,000,000.
 On page 7, line 4, decrease the amount by \$4,521,000,000.
 On page 7, line 6, decrease the amount by \$5,929,000,000.
 On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$1,412,000,000.
 On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$339,000,000.
 On page 19, line 3, increase the amount by \$1,415,000,000.
 On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$1,385,000,000.
 On page 19, line 7, increase the amount by \$1,423,000,000.
 On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$1,417,000,000.

On page 19, line 11, increase the amount by \$1,433,000,000.
 On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by \$1,425,000,000.
 On page 19, line 15, increase the amount by \$1,430,000,000.
 On page 19, line 16, increase the amount by \$1,432,000,000.

SA 3105. Mrs. BOXER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
 On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$435,000,000.
 On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.
 On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.
 On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
 On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$435,000,000.
 On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.
 On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.
 On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$750,000,000.
 On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
 On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$435,000,000.
 On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.
 On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.
 On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$750,000,000.
 On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.
 On page 19, line 4, increase the amount by \$435,000,000.
 On page 19, line 8, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.
 On page 19, line 12, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.
 On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$750,000,000.
 On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$15,000,000.

SA 3106. Mrs. LINCOLN (for herself, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. KOHL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$1,177,000,000.
 On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$439,000,000.
 On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.
 On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$107,000,000.
 On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$57,000,000.
 On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$1,177,000,000.
 On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$439,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.
 On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$107,000,000.
 On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$57,000,000.
 On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$2,029,000,000.
 On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$1,177,000,000.
 On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$439,000,000.
 On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.
 On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$107,000,000.
 On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$57,000,000.
 On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by \$916,000,000.
 On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by \$540,000,000.
 On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by \$220,000,000.
 On page 14, line 5, increase the amount by \$101,000,000.
 On page 14, line 9, increase the amount by \$37,000,000.
 On page 14, line 13, increase the amount by \$18,000,000.
 On page 14, line 21, increase the amount by \$384,000,000.
 On page 14, line 22, increase the amount by \$295,000,000.
 On page 15, line 1, increase the amount by \$67,000,000.
 On page 15, line 5, increase the amount by \$17,000,000.
 On page 15, line 9, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.
 On page 15, line 21, increase the amount by \$95,000,000.
 On page 15, line 22, increase the amount by \$71,000,000.
 On page 16, line 1, increase the amount by \$22,000,000.
 On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$296,000,000.
 On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$12,000,000.
 On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$79,000,000.
 On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$96,000,000.
 On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$63,000,000.
 On page 18, line 15, increase the amount by \$35,000,000.
 On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by \$104,000,000.
 On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.
 On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by \$11,000,000.
 On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by \$234,000,000.
 On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$166,000,000.
 On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by \$40,000,000.
 On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by \$8,000,000.
 On page 22, line 12, increase the amount by \$4,000,000.
 On page 22, line 16, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.
 On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$2,029,000,000.
 On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$1,177,000,000.

SA 3107. Mr. BAUCUS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008

through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 32, line 24, through page 33, line 1, strike “and (C)” and insert the following:

“(C) provides for the establishment of a health care trust fund for victims of tremolite asbestos exposure;
“(D)”.

SA 3108. Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself and Mr. SANTORUM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING MARRIAGE PENALTY RELIEF.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the aggregate reduced levels of Federal revenues under section 101(1)(B) assume the extension of the marriage penalty relief for standard deduction and 15 percent bracket provided under sections 301 and 302 of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (115 Stat. 53) through September 30, 2011; and

(2) such marriage penalty relief should be made permanent.

SA 3109. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING SALES TAX DEDUCTION.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the aggregate reduced levels of Federal revenues under section 101(1)(B) assume the extension of the sales tax deduction provided under section 164(b)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 through September 30, 2011; and

(2) such sales tax deduction should be made permanent.

SA 3110. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

“SEC. . Reserve Fund for Physician Payment Increase under Medicare. If—

(1) the Committee on Finance Reports a bill, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that has the effect of increasing the reimbursement rate for physician services under Section 1848(d) of the Social Security Act; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; the chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Sen-

ate may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3111. Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. DEWINE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ____ RESERVE FUND FOR THE FIRE AND SAFER PROGRAMS.

If a bill or joint resolution is offered, or an amendment is offered thereto, or a conference report is submitted thereon, that provides firefighters and fire departments with critical resources under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Firefighters Grant, the Chairman of the Committee on Budget shall adjust the revenue aggregates and other appropriate aggregates, levels, and limits in their resolution to reflect such legislation to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3112. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$516,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$516,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$737,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$516,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.

On page 13, line 21, increase the amount by \$737,000,000.

On page 13, line 22, increase the amount by \$516,000,000.

On page 14, line 1, increase the amount by \$221,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$737,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$516,000,000.

SA 3113. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$36,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$36,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$36,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 15, line 21, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 15, line 22, increase the amount by \$36,000,000.

On page 16, line 1, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 16, line 5, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 16, line 9, increase the amount by \$75,000,000.

On page 16, line 13, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

SA 3114. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ RESERVE FUND FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS PLANNING.

If the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that—

(1) rebuilds the vaccine industry in the United States which has shrunk from over 25 to less than 5 companies;

(2) improves the United States capacity to produce life-saving pandemic influenza vaccines and antivirals;

(3) ensures adequate funding for advanced development and acquisition of needed medical countermeasures for biodefense and pandemic influenza protection;

(4) enhances the Strategic National Stockpile of pandemic influenza vaccines, antivirals, and other medical products;

(5) strengthens the Federal, State, and local public health infrastructure to effectively respond to a pandemic influenza outbreak;

(6) increases the domestic and international surveillance and outbreak containment capabilities; and

(7) improves public awareness and education of pandemic influenza preparedness planning;

assuming that the Committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302 (a)

of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal years 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3115. Mr. REID (for Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. REID, and Mrs. MURRAY)) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$347,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$84,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 19, line 24, increase the amount by \$124,000,000.

On page 19, line 25, increase the amount by \$27,000,000.

On page 20, line 4, increase the amount by \$61,000,000.

On page 20, line 8, increase the amount by \$21,000,000.

On page 20, line 12, increase the amount by \$10,000,000.

On page 20, line 16, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by \$223,000,000.

On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$198,000,000.

On page 22, line 4, increase the amount by \$23,000,000.

On page 22, line 8, increase the amount by \$2,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$347,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$225,000,000.

SA 3116. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . EARMARK ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) funds appropriated for an earmark project should be solely used for the project and not used by Federal agencies for administrative costs; and

(2) any funds not used by an earmark project should go to deficit reduction.

SA 3117. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$300,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$30,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$111,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$93,000,000.

On page 18, line 11, increase the amount by \$66,000,000.

On page 24, line 24, increase the amount by \$34,000,000.

On page 24, line 25, increase the amount by \$26,000,000.

On page 25, line 4, increase the amount by \$5,000,000.

On page 25, line 8, increase the amount by \$3,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$334,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, decrease the amount by \$56,000,000.

On page 28, line 2, decrease the amount by \$116,000,000.

On page 28, line 5, decrease the amount by \$96,000,000.

On page 28, line 8, decrease the amount by \$66,000,000.

SA 3118. Ms. STABENOW submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . RESERVE FUND TO ALLOW FOR DEFICIT-NEUTRAL LEGISLATION THAT WOULD PROVIDE SENIORS WITH A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT OPTION THAT IS AFFORDABLE, USER-FRIENDLY, AND ADMINISTERED DIRECTLY BY THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate levels and limits in this resolution for a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would—

(1) provide all Medicare beneficiaries with a Medicare-administered prescription drug plan option, while preserving the private prescription drug plan options;

(2) ensure that Medicare beneficiaries pay the lowest possible prescription drug prices by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate with pharmaceutical manufacturers with respect to the purchase price of covered part D drugs on behalf of beneficiaries enrolled in the Medicare-administered prescription drug plan;

(3) improve the part D standard prescription drug benefit; and

(4) guarantee that Medicare beneficiaries receive the FDA-approved drugs they need by preventing prescription drug plans and MA-PD plans from ending coverage of drugs, or imposing restrictions or limitations on coverage of drugs, that were covered when the beneficiary enrolled in the plan until the beneficiary has the opportunity to switch plans, with an exception to such guarantee for brand name drugs for which there is a generic drug approved under section 505(j) of the Food and Drug Cosmetic Act that is placed on the market during the period in which the guarantee applies;

by the amount provided in such measure for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3119. Mr. ENSIGN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the United Nations Secretary General stated in March 2005, “the Commission on Human Rights suffers from declining credibility and professionalism, and is in major need of reform” and that a fundamental problem is that, “States have sought membership . . . not to strengthen human rights but to protect themselves against criticism or to criticize others”;

(2) the United States and other countries called for the abolition of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and its replacement with a new Human Rights Council;

(3) current Members of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the primary human rights body of the United Nations, include some of the worst violators of human rights in the world, such as China, Cuba, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe;

(4) there are no criteria regarding the human rights record of a country for membership on the new United Nations Human Rights Council and even those countries that are found complicit in massive and sustained human rights abuses would be able to serve;

(5) even countries under sanctions by the United Nations Security Council for human rights violations or terrorism are not categorically excluded from membership on the United Nations Human Rights Council;

(6) the Government of the United States, which had been a member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights every term since 1947, with 1 exception, has played a leadership role in efforts to promote human rights throughout the history of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights;

(7) the Government of the United States would be ineligible for membership on the Human Rights Council every 6 years;

(8) the Government of the United States formally opposed the creation of the United Nations Human Rights Council in a General Assembly session on March 15, 2006; and

(9) the Government of the United States would be required to cover 22 percent of the costs of the Human Rights Council.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Government of the United States should decline to participate on the United Nations Human Rights Council until the Secretary of State certifies to the Congress that the United Nations has passed a resolution affirming that countries found complicit in sustained human rights abuses are ineligible for membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council; and

(2) the Government of the United States should not provide any funds for the United Nations Human Rights Council until the Secretary of State certifies to the Congress that the United Nations has passed a resolution affirming that countries found complicit in sustained human rights abuses are ineligible for membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council.

SA 3120. Mr. SMITH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. TO EXPRESS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT LEGISLATIVE ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN TO INSTITUTE EQUITY UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—

(1) Almost 36,300,000 Americans were over age 65 in 2004, with the population projected to almost double to 71,500,000 by 2030.

(2) It is estimated that 20 percent of, or over 7 million, adults age 65 and older suffer from a mental illness and that because of population growth and an increased incidence by 2030 this number will grow to 15.7 million.

(3) 5,248 older Americans died by suicide in 2003.

(4) In 2002, older Americans comprised 12.3 percent of the population, yet represented 17.5 percent of completed suicides.

(5) Caucasian men over age 85 are at greatest risk, with a suicide rate almost 5 times higher than the national average.

(6) It is reported that among older adults, for every completed suicide, 4 attempts are made.

(7) Research shows that 20 percent of older Americans who die by suicide visited their physician within the previous 24 hours of their suicide, 41 percent within the previous week of their suicide, and 75 percent within the previous month of their suicide.

(8) The Medicare program discriminates against persons with mental illness by imposing a 50 percent copayment on outpatient mental health services compared to a 20 percent copayment for outpatient physical health services.

(9) Correcting this inequity in the Medicare program was one of the top ten White House Conference on Aging resolutions.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the functional totals in this resolution assume that Congress should act to provide mental health copayment equity to America's seniors under the Medicare program.

SA 3121. Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself and Mr. SMITH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Govern-

ment for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 406.

SA 3122. Mr. TALENT (for himself, Mr. FRIST, and Mr. ALLEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 59, after line 7, add the following:

SEC. 408. LINE ITEM VETO.

It is the sense of the Senate that Congress should provide the President with a constitutionally acceptable line item veto authority.

SA 3123. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, line 21, increase the amount by \$200,000,000.

On page 12, line 22, increase the amount by \$200,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$200,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by \$200,000,000.

SA 3124. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 18, line 24, increase the amount by \$143,000,000.

On page 18, line 25, increase the amount by \$143,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$143,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by \$143,000,000.

SA 3125. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 21, line 24, increase the amount by \$128,700,000.

On page 21, line 25, increase the amount by \$128,700,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$128,700,000.

On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by \$128,700,000.

SA 3126. Mr. COLEMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 14, line 21, increase the amount by \$40,000,000.

On page 14, line 22, increase the amount by \$40,000,000.

On page 27, line 23, decrease the amount by \$40,000,000.

On page 27, line 24, increase the amount by \$40,000,000.

SA 3127. Mr. HAGEM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. _____. RESERVE FUND FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ENTITLEMENT REFORM COMMISSION.

If—

(1) the Committee on Finance of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that establishes a Comprehensive Entitlement Reform Commission for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive review of the Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid programs and making recommendations to sustain the solvency and stability of these programs for future generations; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal year 2007 and the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

SA 3128. Mr. DOMENICI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 4, line 17, increase the amount by \$151,593,000.

On page 4, line 19, increase the amount by \$156,269,000.

On page 4, line 21, increase the amount by \$162,937,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$69,093,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$133,769,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$155,437,000.

On page 5, line 23, decrease the amount by \$69,093,000.

On page 5, line 25, decrease the amount by \$133,769,000.

On page 6, line 2, decrease the amount by \$155,437,000.

On page 6, line 12, increase the amount by \$69,093,000.

On page 6, line 14, increase the amount by \$202,862,000.

On page 6, line 16, increase the amount by \$358,299,000.

On page 7, line 2, increase the amount by \$69,093,000.

On page 7, line 4, increase the amount by \$202,862,000.

On page 7, line 6, increase the amount by \$358,299,000.

On page 13, line 4, increase the amount by \$150,000,000.

On page 13, line 5, increase the amount by \$67,500,000.

On page 13, line 8, increase the amount by \$150,000,000.

On page 13, line 9, increase the amount by \$127,500,000.

On page 13, line 12, increase the amount by \$150,000,000.

On page 13, line 13, increase the amount by \$142,500,000.

On page 41, strike lines 8 through 11 and insert the following:
ate may make the adjustments described in subsections (b) and (c).

(b) ADJUSTMENT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005.—If the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto or a conference report is submitted thereon that makes available a portion of the receipts resulting from enactment of the legislation described in subsection (a) for programs to implement of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise committee allocations for that committee and other appropriate budgetary aggregates and allocations of new budget authority and outlays by the amount provided by that measure for that purpose, but the adjustment may not exceed \$150,000,000 in new budget authority in each of fiscal years 2009 through 2011.

(c) ADJUSTMENT FOR THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAMS AND ADDITIONAL LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.—If the Committee on Appro- * * *

SA 3129. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$283,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$353,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$71,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$283,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$353,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$71,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$707,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$283,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$353,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$71,000,000.

On page 17, line 22, increase the amount by \$707,000,000.

On page 17, line 23, increase the amount by \$283,000,000.

On page 18, line 3, increase the amount by \$353,000,000.

On page 18, line 7, increase the amount by \$71,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$707,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$283,000,000.

SA 3130. Mr. SCHUMER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 3, line 13, increase the amount by \$9,000,000.

On page 3, line 15, increase the amount by \$31,000,000.

On page 3, line 17, increase the amount by \$65,000,000.

On page 3, line 19, increase the amount by \$95,000,000.

On page 3, line 21, increase the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 4, line 1, increase the amount by \$9,000,000.

On page 4, line 2, increase the amount by \$31,000,000.

On page 4, line 3, increase the amount by \$65,000,000.

On page 4, line 4, increase the amount by \$95,000,000.

On page 4, line 6, increase the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 4, line 13, increase the amount by \$308,000,000.

On page 5, line 4, increase the amount by \$9,000,000.

On page 5, line 6, increase the amount by \$31,000,000.

On page 5, line 8, increase the amount by \$65,000,000.

On page 5, line 10, increase the amount by \$95,000,000.

On page 5, line 12, increase the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 25, line 24, increase the amount by \$308,000,000.

On page 25, line 25, increase the amount by \$9,000,000.

On page 26, line 4, increase the amount by \$31,000,000.

On page 26, line 8, increase the amount by \$65,000,000.

On page 26, line 12, increase the amount by \$95,000,000.

On page 26, line 16, increase the amount by \$77,000,000.

On page 53, line 1, increase the amount by \$308,000,000.

On page 53, line 2, increase the amount by \$9,000,000.

SA 3131. Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mrs. LINCOLN) proposed an amendment to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 47, increasing the statutory limit on the public debt; as follows:

At the end of the joint resolution, insert the following:

“Sec. STUDY.—(a) The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and other appropriate agencies of the United States Government, shall conduct a study to examine the economic effects of the holding of United States publicly-held debt by foreign governments, foreign central banks, other foreign institutions, and foreign individuals.

(b) The Secretary shall transmit that study to the Congress within 180 days of the date of enactment of this legislation.

(c) The study shall provide an analysis of: “(1) for each year from 1980 to the present, the amount and term of foreign-owned debt

held by the public, broken down by foreign governments, foreign central banks, other foreign institutions, and foreign individuals, and expressed in nominal terms and as a percentage of the total amount of publicly-held debt in each year;

“(2) the economic effects that the increased foreign ownership of United States publicly-held debt has on

“(A) long-term interest rates in the United States,

“(B) global average interest rates,

“(C) the value of the United States dollar,

“(D) United States capital market liquidity,

“(E) the cost of private capital in the United States,

“(F) the generation of employment in the United States through foreign affiliates, and

“(G) the growth in real gross domestic product of the United States;

“(3) (A) for each year from 1980 to the present, the effect of foreign debt on the United States income account,

“(B) the predicted effect over the next 20 years, and

“(C) the effect of the deteriorating income account on the overall United States current account deficit;

“(4) the ability of the Department of the Treasury to track purchases of publicly held debt in secondary and tertiary markets, or, if this ability does not exist, the implications of that inability for fiscal policy, monetary policy, and the predictability of capital markets;

“(5) the effect that foreign ownership of United States publicly-held debt has or could have on United States trade policy;

“(6) whether the level of United States debt owned by China may adversely affect the ability of the United States to negotiate with China regarding currency manipulation by China;

“(7) the effect of the increase of foreign holdings of United States debt held by the public on national security; and

“(8) the implicit tax burden that results from foreign ownership of United States debt held by the public, defined as the per capita amount that a United States Federal income taxpayer would pay in annual Federal income taxes to fully service such foreign debt during each of fiscal years 2006 through 2010.”

SA 3132. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 83, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2006 and 2008 through 2011; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . RESERVE FUND FOR THE PROTECTION OF UNBORN CHILDREN.

If—

(1) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate reports a bill or joint resolution, or if an amendment is offered thereto, or if a conference report is submitted thereon, that implements the provisions of Senate bill 51 (109th Congress) relating to the protection of unborn children; and

(2) that committee is within its allocation as provided under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; the chairman of the Committee on the Budget may make the appropriate adjustments in allocations and aggregates to the extent that such legislation would not increase the deficit for fiscal years 2007 and for the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2006, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to continue to receive testimony on the Joint Strike Fighter F136 Alternative Engine Program in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2007 and the future years Defense Program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at 1:30 p.m., on Innovation and Competitiveness.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 15 at 11:30 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is to consider pending nominations and any other pending calendar business of the Committee which may be ready for consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. to hold a hearing on Post-Palestinian Election Challenges in the Middle East.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at 9 a.m. on legislative items.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing on S. 1899, the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act Amendments of 2005.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet to conduct a markup on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at 9 a.m. in The Mansfield Room, S-207 The Capitol.

Agenda

I. Nominations: Norman Randy Smith, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit; Patrick J. Schiltz, to be U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Minnesota; Steven G. Bradbury, to be an Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel; John F. Clark, to be Director of the United States Marshals Service.

II. Bills: S. , Comprehensive Immigration Reform; Chairman's Mark; S. 1768, A bill to permit the televising of Supreme Court proceedings: Specter, Leahy, Cornyn, Grassley, Schumer, Feingold, Durbin; S. 829, Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2005: Grassley, Schumer, Cornyn, Leahy, Feingold, Durbin, Graham, DeWine, Specter; S. 489, Federal Consent Decree Fairness Act: Alexander, Kyl, Cornyn, Graham, Hatch; S. 2039, Prosecutors and Defendants Incentive Act of 2005: DURBIN, SPECTER, DEWINE, LEAHY, KENNEDY, FEINSTEIN, FEINGOLD; S. 2292, A bill to provide relief for the Federal judiciary from excessive rent charges: Specter, Leahy, Cornyn, Feinstein, Biden.

III. Matters: S.J. Res. 1, Marriage Protection Amendment: Allard, Sessions, Kyl, Hatch, Cornyn, Coburn, Brownback.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2006 at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed briefing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet tomorrow, March 15, 2006 from 10 a.m.–12 p.m. in Dirksen 106 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 15, 2006 at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing on "Hospital Group Purchasing: Are the Industry's Reforms Sufficient to Ensure Competition?" in Room 226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Witness List

Panel I: Richard J. Bednar, Coordinator, Healthcare Group Purchasing Industry Initiative, Washington, DC; Mark B. Leahey, Executive Director, Medical Device Manufacturers Association, Washington, DC; S. Prakash

Sethi, Professor, Baruch College, The City University of New York, New York, NY; and Mina Ubbing, President and CEO, Fairfield Medical Center, Lancaster, OH.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce and the District of Columbia be authorized to meet on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, at 2:30 p.m., for a hearing entitled, "The GAO High-Risk List: An Update."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 15, 2006, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to receive testimony on ground forces readiness in review of the Defense authorization request for fiscal year 2007.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

Mr. COBURN. In executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the Agriculture Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following nominations, and that they be placed on the calendar: PN 1079 PN, Marc L. Kesselman; PN 1329, Linda Avery Strachan; PN 1196, Boyd Kevin Rutherford; PN 1158, Gale A. Buchanan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will return to legislative session.

NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS DAY

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 402, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 402) designating the first day of April, 2006 as "National Asbestos Awareness Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution

be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 402) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 402

Whereas dangerous asbestos fibers are invisible and cannot be smelled or tasted;

Whereas the inhalation of airborne asbestos fibers can cause significant damage;

Whereas these fibers can cause mesothelioma, asbestosis, and other health problems;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases can take 10 to 50 years to present themselves;

Whereas the expected survival time for those diagnosed with mesothelioma is between 6 and 24 months;

Whereas generally little is known about late stage treatment and there is no cure for asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas early detection of asbestos-related diseases may give some patients increased treatment options and might improve their prognosis;

Whereas the United States has substantially reduced its consumption of asbestos yet continues to consume almost 7,000 metric tons of the fibrous mineral for use in certain products throughout the Nation;

Whereas asbestos-related diseases have killed thousands of people in the United States;

Whereas asbestos exposures continue and safety and prevention will reduce and has reduced significantly asbestos exposure and asbestos-related diseases;

Whereas asbestos has been a cause of occupational cancer;

Whereas thousands of workers in the United States face significant asbestos exposure;

Whereas thousands of Americans die from asbestos-related diseases every year;

Whereas a significant percentage of all asbestos-related disease victims were exposed to asbestos on naval ships and in shipyards;

Whereas asbestos was used in the construction of a significant number of office buildings and public facilities built before 1975; and

Whereas the establishment of a "National Asbestos Awareness Day" would raise public awareness about the prevalence of asbestos-related diseases and the dangers of asbestos exposure: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates the first day of April 2006 as "National Asbestos Awareness Day."

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2006

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in recess until 9 a.m. on Thursday, March 16. I further ask consent that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 83, the budget resolution, as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, today we have made significant progress on the budget resolution. We had 10 roll-call votes on amendments to the resolution. The bill managers have done an exceptional job working through the process. That being said, we have many amendments filed, and Senators who have amendments should already be working with the bill managers.

Tomorrow will be a very busy day. Under an agreement reached this afternoon, tomorrow morning at 10:30 we will have a series of votes on the budget resolution and the debt limit bill. At 1:30, all time on the budget resolution will be deemed expired and the vote-arama will begin. Senators are reminded to stay close to the Chamber and plan their schedules accordingly.

RECESS UNTIL 9 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:05 p.m., recessed until Thursday, March 16, 2006, at 9 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate March 15, 2006:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WARREN W. TICHENOR, OF TEXAS, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, VICE KEVIN E. MOLEY.

MARK C. MINTON, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO MONGOLIA.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ANDREW VON ESCHENBACH, OF TEXAS, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF FOOD AND DRUGS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, VICE LESTER M. CRAWFORD, RESIGNED.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

JOHN A. RIZZO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, VICE SCOTT W. MULLER, RESIGNED.

DISCHARGED NOMINATIONS

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry was discharged from further consideration of the following nominations and the nominations were placed on the Executive Calendar:

MARC L. KESSELMAN, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

LINDA AVERY STRACHAN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.

BOYD KEVIN RUTHERFORD, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.

GALE A. BUCHANAN, OF GEORGIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS.